

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 359

SATURDAY DECEMBER 27, 2008

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

Visit us online @
www.saipantribune.com

OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Would you favor the use of nuclear energy as an energy source in the CNMI if it were shown to be safe?

Let your voice be heard!
Go to
www.saipantribune.com
to cast your vote.

88 without a government budget for FY 2009
DAYS

INSIDE



Christmas Horror

A man dressed like Santa went to a Christmas Eve party and slaughtered at least eight people before killing himself.

NATION...Page 10



Eartha Kitt, 81

Eartha Kitt, a sultry singer, dancer and actress who became an international symbol of elegance and sensuality, has died. She was 81.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

2 want deportation of aliens with drug charges. **PAGE 2**
'CUC not using \$3M 702 funding for Rota' **PAGE 3**

Man electrocuted in CK

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A man died of electrocution yesterday after the stick he was using to harvest fruits from a breadfruit tree crossed lines with the live wire of an electric pole in Chalan Kanoa.

According to witnesses, the man died instantly from the electric shock.

Police authorities were still completing reports on the incident and have yet

to release the identity of the victim.

The incident happened around 12pm at the corner of Chalan Kanoa Drive and

See **MAN** on Page 4

NWA to suspend Osaka-Saipan service in March

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

suspended March 1, 2009, in response to the global economic recession and softening customer demand," he said.

See **NWA** on Page 4

Not even a week after Asian Airlines welcomed its inaugural Osaka-Saipan flight comes news that Northwest Airlines will be stopping its own service to the route starting March 1, 2009.

Northwest Airlines Guam and Saipan general manager Richard A. Parsons confirmed the decision in an e-mail to the *Saipan Tribune*.

"Unfortunately yes, Osaka-Saipan will be



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this file photo, a child eats a cake while waiting to board the new Northwest Airlines Airbus A330 during the aircraft's introduction and media tour in September 2007.

Inos urges budget controls ASAP

'Nothing on the table enough to cushion continued economic decline'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Finance Secretary Eloy S. Inos said the CNMI has nothing on the table that is significant enough to cushion the impact of the economic contraction.

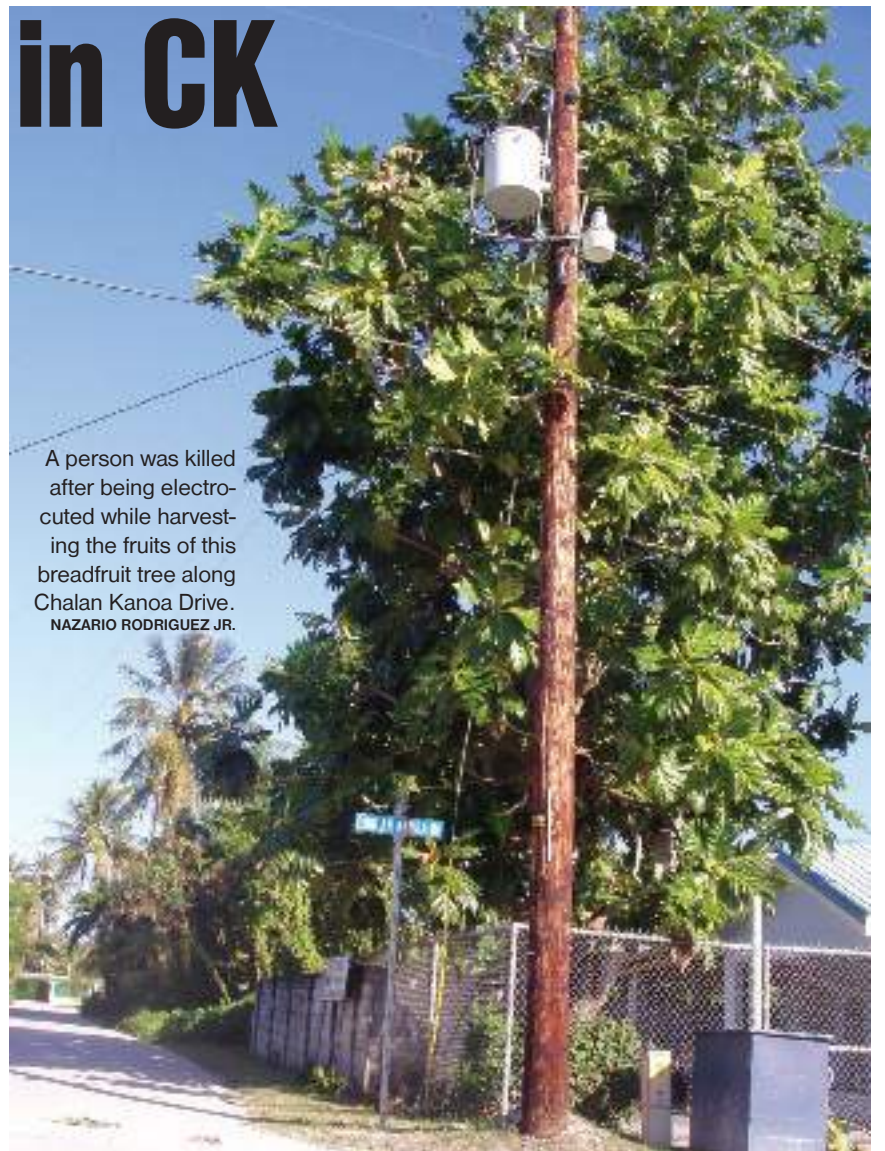
In a letter sent to Gov. Benigno R. Fi-

tial last week, Inos recommended the immediate implementation of budgetary controls for all government agencies.



Inos

See **INOS** on Page 4



A person was killed after being electrocuted while harvesting the fruits of this breadfruit tree along Chalan Kanoa Drive.
NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Studies show low efficacy in vitamin supplements

By KAREN KAPLAN
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

They were some of the most promising medicines of the 1990s—wonder pills that appeared to fight cancer, heart disease, stroke and other ailments.

Laboratory tests and initial studies in people suggested that lowly vitamins could play a crucial role in preventing some of the most intractable illnesses, especially in an aging population. The National Institutes of Health gave them

the same treatment as top-notch pharmaceutical drugs, investing hundreds of millions of dollars in elaborate clinical trials designed to quantify their disease-fighting abilities.

Now the results from those trials are

See **STUDIES** on Page 4



START 2009 WITH VALUE LIKE NO OTHER!

\$20.09

PREPAID DEAL

CONNECT

See stores for details.

Local

2 want deportation of aliens with drug charges

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

If two lawmakers have their way, alien workers who are

merely charged with unlawful trafficking or possession of illegal drugs but have yet to be convicted would already be deported from the Commonwealth.

Representatives Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero and Stanley T. Torres have introduced House Bill 16-207 to add two subsections in the Commonwealth

Code allowing the deportation of aliens charged with unlawful trafficking or possession of controlled substance.

Under the proposed measure,



Torres



Deleon Guerrero

aliens can be deported if formal charges are filed against them with the Superior Court and that probable cause has been established as to the violations.

At present, nonresi-

See 2 WANT on Page 4

Hermès craftsman shows Saipan the making of a luxury hand bag

By **NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.**
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A leather craftsman from Paris, France arrives at dawn today for a nine-day demonstration on the art of making a signature shoulder bag by hand.

Guillaume Dulatillon will begin the demonstration at 11am today at the Hermès Boutique of the DFS Galleria Saipan.

Dulatillon was also here last year for a similar cause, which

is to demonstrate the unique Hermès craftsmanship practiced in Paris workshops for over 170 years.

Boutique manager Faye HJ Jang confirmed the arrival of Dulatillon yesterday.

Customers of the Paris-based company will have the opportunity to see how the master craftsman makes a bag at the boutique from Dec. 27 to Jan. 5.

The demonstrations are set at 11am to 3pm and 6pm to 10pm.

Those who have Hermès bags that need to be repaired could bring them to Dulatillon.

Dulatillon will then bring the bags to Paris, where the original maker of the bag would personally repair it. Every Hermès product has a patch that identifies the name and code of the maker of that particular product.

Jang said it takes about 17 days for a master craftsman to finish a leather bag because of the intricate stitching process.

The most expensive item currently on display at the boutique is worth \$26,000. It is made of crocodile skin with diamond designs and accessories.

DFS Galleria Saipan sales assistant manager Wolf Mojica said they are pleased to have this great feature for Saipan and the public is invited to come and watch.

The craftsman will manufacture, by hand stitching, several leather hand bags and explain to people how it is done.

Mobil's Bamba Suda retires after 31 years

Cecile Bamba Suda, Public and Government Affairs manager for Mobil, has announced her retirement after 31 years of being with the oil giant.

In an e-mail message, Bamba Suda said she will retire from the company effective Dec. 31, 2008.

"It is my desire to...extend my sincere appreciation to you all for being part of my career with Mobil and for having es-

tablished the many relationships I have with you and so many others throughout the region. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for allowing me to be part of your life both professionally and personally," she said.

As for her future plans, Bamba Suda did not elaborate, merely saying, "I look forward to the next chapter of my career." (*Saipan Tribune*)

The Islands' Grand Countdown

Welcome 2009 with a bang @ the poolside

New year's eve dinner buffet & drink all you can...6pm-9pm
B-B-Q, Japanese & Chamorro cuisines, curving stations & more....
\$45 adult/\$20 child
VIP & local discount apply
Senior citizen 30% off

DECEMBER 31, 2008

Another exiting offer from the Grand!

For reservation please call 235-6616, 234-6601 ext:301/302

LIVE MUSIC OF
STREET BEAT
at 10:00pm - 12mn

Drink all you can... Games ... Give-aways...
and Display of Fireworks at 12 midnight...

For only \$25 p/p

And continue partying at with **DJ J4UROCK**
after the countdown till 4am
in the morning.

Saipan Grand Hotel
A TanHoldings Company

Live the Fiesta Way!

Healthy Buffet Lunch

The healthy way is the Fiesta Way!

Monday to Friday 11am to 1:30pm

CNMI Resident discount

\$5.99

FREE
VALET SERVICE

For Reservations and Inquiry
Please Call 234-6414
ext. 1547-1548 or 233-6414

FIESTA
Resort & SPA
SAIPAN
A TanHoldings Company

'CUC not using \$3M 702 funding for Rota'

Manglona asks CUC to hire technical staff to get projects moving

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rota has almost \$3 million in Covenant Section 702 funding that has been sitting for a cou-

ple of years because the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is not pushing to do the projects, according to the island's senator, Paul A. Manglona.

Manglona told *Saipan Tri-*

bune that CUC is the expenditure authority for the 702 funding, but the utility agency is not moving the projects.

"We need to use our 702 funding not only because they are available, but because the projects are very critical as far as power distribution and overhauling of our two engines [is concerned]," said Manglona, who chairs the Senate Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications.

The projects include overhauling of the power engines, power distribution, and water distribution.

Manglona said Rota has been very flexible with CUC because the electric power issue on Saipan is in crisis mode.

"But nonetheless Rota has funding available from 702 for many years now for power distribution, water line projects and we need CUC to put maybe one or two more technical people in

there to move these capital improvement projects," the senator said.

Right now, Manglona said, CUC executive director Tony Muña is overwhelmed with his work and that he needs help.

"I think he needs maybe one or two more technical people to focus on Rota and Tinian issues because there's so many 702 funding that are not being used," he pointed out.

The senator said they under-

stand that CUC's focus right now is in putting Saipan's power engines back on line, that's why Rota has been very understanding.

"But CUC cannot just drop the ball on everything. They need to get maybe one or two more technical people to move these projects," he said.

Manglona said 702 funding could possibly be used to pay for the salaries of these technical personnel.

DFS names employees of the year



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tomoko Esteves is DFS' employee of the year for sales.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rodrigo San Pedro is DFS' employee of the year for support services.

By **NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.**
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

DFS Galleria Saipan recently named its 2008 Employees of the Year for sales and support.

Tomoko Esteves was chosen as the employee of the year for sales while Rodrigo San Pedro was chosen as employee of the year for support services.

Wolf Mojica, sales assistant general manager, said the names of the two awardees this year was announced during DFS' celebration of Christmas Around the World at a party co-sponsored by Hard Rock Café on Friday night, Dec. 19.

Mojica said there were a total of 250 employees and guests who attended the Christmas party.

"They all enjoyed the sumptuous buffet, music, dancing, and skits put on by several of our talented employees," he said.

The employees also organized several contests to make the night a special one.

The best in costume was awarded to individuals and couples.

"Israel, China, Japan, the United States, and Heaven were all represented on the stage. There were also many raffle prizes donated by various local businesses given to more than half of the attendees," Mojica said.

However, DFS scaled back its annual Christmas party this year due to the economic downtrend. Instead, half of the budget was donated to two local charities: the CHC Volunteers Association and Matutana House of Prayer.

"DFS would like to thank the Hard Rock Café, Miller Lite, and all the other businesses that supported this event," Mojica said.

Vladivostok Air passengers to stay 10-21 days

By **MARK RABAGO**
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Like their compatriots last year, passengers of Vladivostok Air's charter flight this coming Dec. 28 will have an extended stay in the CNMI.

Vladivostok Air Japan manager Roman Grigoriev said passengers of the first of three charter flights from the former Soviet Union will remain on the islands until Jan. 7 and Jan. 18, which incidentally are the arrival dates of the other two charter flights.

He said the type of aircraft that will be used in the three flights are Russian-built Tupolev TU204-300 with capacity

of eight business class and 132 economy class seats—bringing the total maximum capacity of passengers to 140 each flight, not 166 as earlier reported.

Grigoriev said he has no knowledge yet on how many passengers will be in each of the three flights.

"Number of passengers we are not sure yet, since passengers are still booking. [But] first flight [is] almost full. On board will be different people, families, etc.," he said.

Vladivostok Air and fellow Russian carrier DalAvia flew special charter flights to the CNMI in the waning days of 2007, which exemplified the

islands' growing appeal to the market.

Fiscal year to date number indicate that the Russian tourism market is up 86 percent from the same period year ago: 449 in October-November 2008 to 836 in the same period in fiscal year 2009. Just last month, 456 visitors from the former Soviet Union arrived in the CNMI, compared to 261 in November 2007.

The CNMI, three hours travel from most cities in Japan, is served from Japan by Northwest Airlines. From Korea, Asiana Airlines provides daily direct flights from Seoul and four times a week from Busan.

Vladivostok Air, founded in

1932, is now the largest air carrier in Russia's Far East. It carries over 700,000 passengers annually and provide flight service to 32 domestic destinations as well as 12 international destinations.

The carrier's domestic service includes Vladivostok, Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Irkutsk, Sakhalin, Khabarovsk, Novosibirsk, Petropavlovsk Kamchatsky, Yekaterinburg, Magadan, Sochi, Kemerovo, Krasnodar, Yakutsk among others. International flights include: Anchorage, Osaka, Niigata, Toyama, Kitakyushu, Seoul, Busan, Beijing, Harbin, Bangkok, Hanoi, and Frankfurt.

Once in a Lifetime Experience

Holyland
2009 Tour
with Jordan & Egypt

Amman, Petra, Jordan; Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Israel; Dead Sea, Cairo, Mt. Sinai, Egypt

MARCH 7-21, 2009

\$2,88500

Twin sharing/per person

Includes

- Roundtrip Economy Class airfare Manila-Dubai-Amman and Cairo-Dubai-Manila via Emirates.
- Breakfast and dinners plus 1 lunch
- All hotel accommodations at 3-4 star hotels
- All tours mentioned with English Speaking guides
- Transfer from airport to hotel and vice versa
- Private motorcoach with Tour Manager and Local Guide.

HURRY UP! LIMITED SLOT AVAILABLE.

For more information please call your travel agents, Lisa and Jie at (670) 235-3708 to 10 or e-mail us at customerservice@centurytravelagency.com
www.centurytravelagency.com

Century Travel
AGENCY, INC.
A TanHoldings Company
Going the Extra Mile to Serve You!
Ground Floor CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan,
PMB 193 Box 10000 PPP, Saipan MP 96950

Some restrictions apply.

STUDIES

From Page 1

rolling in, and nearly all of them fail to show any benefit from taking vitamins and minerals.

This month, two long-term trials involving more than 50,000 participants offered fresh evidence that vitamin C, vitamin E and selenium supplements don't reduce the risk of prostate, colorectal, lung, bladder or pancreatic cancer. Other recent studies have found that over-the-counter vitamins and minerals offered no help in fighting other cancers, stroke and cardiovascular disease.

Research has even suggested that, in some circumstances, vitamin and mineral supplements can be unsafe.

Some physicians now advise their patients not to bother with taking the pills and to rely instead on a healthy diet to provide needed vitamins and minerals.

"These things are ineffective, and in high doses they can cause harm," said Dr. Edgar R. Miller, a professor of medicine and epidemiology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore. "People are unhappy with their diets, they're stressed out, and they think it will help. It's just wishful thinking."

Yet faith in vitamins runs deep. The Council for Responsible Nutrition, a Washington, D.C.-based trade group, estimates that 64 percent of American adults take vitamin and mineral supplements. Despite the steady drumbeat of reports questioning their efficacy, sales have risen consistently from \$5 billion in 1995 to \$10 billion this year, according to Nutrition Business Journal.

Scientists remain convinced that vitamins are essential to health. But they have puzzled over how their obvious benefits could be so elusive in randomized controlled trials, the gold standard of medical research.

"You really do need vitamin E. You really do need vitamin C. You really do need selenium," said Jeffrey Blumberg, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Antioxidants Research Laboratory at Tufts University in Boston. "Without them, you die."

Blumberg and others now believe that a combination of factors—including the versions of vitamins that were tested and the populations they were tested in—probably doomed the studies from the start.

"In retrospect, maybe the expectations were a little bit unrealistic," said Blumberg, whose research has been funded in part by supplement makers.

Unlike observational studies, which look backward at groups of people to identify factors that are associated with a particular disease, a forward-looking randomized controlled trial has the power to show that a particular factor can prevent the disease.

The studies rely on thousands of participants who are randomly assigned to receive a medicine or an identical-looking dummy pill. Researchers carefully track the participants so they can account for other factors that might affect health outcomes, such as age, diet and amount of physical activity. After several years, the researchers compare the number of people in each group that developed a particular disease and use statistical tools to see whether the medicine made a difference.

Vitamin A and beta carotene were the first supplements to be tested that way. In observational studies from the 1980s, researchers noticed that people who ate lots of vegetables rich in beta carotene, a precursor of vitamin A, were less likely to be diagnosed with lung cancer and other cancers compared with people who didn't. Thus, they reasoned, the vitamin supplements likely reduced the risk of lung cancer.

The thinking was, "Let's get a bunch of people who smoked for 30 years and

see if it's going to be a magic bullet for them," said nutritionist Andrew Shao, a vice president for scientific and regulatory affairs for the Council for Responsible Nutrition, a trade association for the supplement industry. "We were all guilty of wanting to go for that home-run-style randomized trial that would validate everything once and for all."

It didn't.

One trial that followed 29,000 male smokers in Finland for an average of six years found that men who took beta carotene were 18 percent more likely to be diagnosed with lung cancer and 8 percent more likely to die during the study than men who didn't.

A second trial involved 18,000 American men and women who were smokers, former smokers, or were exposed to asbestos at work. That study found that after an average of four years, lung cancer rates were 28 percent higher among those who took beta carotene and vitamin A, and their overall risk of death during the trial jumped by 17 percent.

Further research revealed that beta carotene curbs the body's ability to metabolize vitamin A, which is needed to keep cancer cells in check, Shao said.

Researchers tried again and again with other combinations of vitamins and minerals. Among the multimillion-dollar studies sponsored by the National Institutes of Health:

■ The Women's Health Study followed 39,876 women for an average of 10 years. Those who took vitamin E were just as likely to develop heart disease, stroke and a variety of cancers as the women who took a placebo, according to results published in 2005 in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

■ The Women's Antioxidant Cardio-

vascular Study tested the effects of vitamins C, E and beta carotene in 8,171 women with signs of heart disease for an average of 9.4 years. None of the supplements had any effect, according to a 2007 study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine.

■ The Physicians' Health Study tested vitamins C and E in 14,641 male doctors for an average of eight years and found they didn't make their hearts healthier. The results were published in November in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

■ The Women's Health Initiative tracked 36,282 women for an average of seven years and found that vitamin D plus calcium didn't protect against invasive breast cancer, according to a study published in November in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute. Previous studies of these women found the supplements offered modest protection against hip fractures but didn't prevent other bone fractures or colorectal cancer.

■ The Selenium and Vitamin E Cancer Prevention Trial tested those supplements in 35,533 men for more than five years and found that they didn't reduce the risk of prostate cancer, according to results released this month in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The trial was halted early, in part because the supplements were associated with a slight increase in the risk of prostate cancer and diabetes.

Researchers have identified several reasons why vitamins don't lend themselves to randomized controlled trials. Chief among them is that there is no true placebo group when it comes to vitamins and minerals because everyone gets some in their diet.

said that, by adding two additional grounds for deportation, the legislation also serves to decrease the abuse and manipulation of the criminal justice system by providing due process in the form of civil remedy.

The lawmakers said the prosecution of drug offenders is quite costly, regardless of the nationality or status of the offender.

"Significantly, however, the costs associated with the prosecution of a nonresident alien offender relative to a resident offender are nearly always higher," they said.

Alien who are arrested, they said, typically have no ties to the community, no means to secure bail, and no means to support themselves while awaiting trial.

"Thus, scarce resources are used to feed, house, and eventually deport alien offenders whose ability to enter and remain within the Commonwealth, is strictly limited to begin with," the congressmen said.

victim's body down from the breadfruit tree.

He was later sent to the hospital.

The nursing supervisor at the Commonwealth Health Center said they could not release any details regarding this incident until Monday when administrative officials report for duty because it is only through them that any information may be given to the public.

But, according to a source, the victim was already dead even before reaching the emergency room.

Department of Public Safety's public information officer Lei Ogumoro could not provide more information about the case as she is reportedly on administrative leave.

INOS

From Page 1

In the first two months of Fiscal Year 2009 alone (October and November 2008), the government's collections were approximately \$1.2 million less than the estimate, he pointed out.

In the midst of this continuing decline, Inos said, the CNMI is also challenged by new confirmed reports that three of the last four remaining garment manufacturers have either closed operations or will be shutting down in the next 30 days.

Inos also pointed to recent confirmed reports that Northwest Airlines will scrap its Osaka-Saipan route on March 1, 2009.

The Marianas Visitors Authority reported that this route contributes approximately \$112 million into the CNMI economy. The Finance Secretary said the direct government revenue loss from the termination of this direct service is at least \$3.5 million.

"Asiana Airline has plans to launch a direct flight on the same route, but not in the volume or load factor that is significant to offset the loss from the Northwest Airlines' discontinued service," he said.

Adverse effect

Inos said the economic decline as witnessed in FY 2008 continues to adversely affect government revenues, even into the current fiscal year.

"In our preliminary report on revenue collections and expenditures and obligations for last fiscal year, we reported a shortfall in the revenue budget of approximately \$4.5 million. This represents a decrease in general government revenues of approximately 4.6 percent over the previous year," Inos said.

He pointed out that a few of the major assumptions and recommendations inherent in the original revenue estimate have not been institutionalized.

"Accordingly, they cannot be relied upon as viable sources of funds available for current operations," Inos said, citing the recommended increase in the various business license fees as well as the uncertainty in the collection of receivables.

He said the original revenue budget submitted for FY 2009 was \$156.8 million (a net of \$1.7 million reduction) as adopted under the current House Resolution 16-2.

The Secretary proposed a revision to this revenue budget down to \$148 million, which is a net reduction of \$8.7 million.

"Barring any unforeseen and/or extraordinary events which might affect the revised estimates, we determine with reasonable certainty that the amount of internal resources that the CNMI will receive this fiscal year will be approximately \$148,084,000," he said.

Budget message

In view of the significance of the revision of the budgetary resources for FY 2009, Inos recommended that the governor transmit a special budget message to the Legislature.

"In the message, I recommend we institute immediate budgetary control by mandating proportionate reduction in the continuing budget authority for all branches, offices, departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Commonwealth subject to general fund appropriations," he said.

Inos said the levels of expenditures authorized under the Legislature's proposed \$165.4 million budget for FY 2009 without the benefit of cost cutting measures "provide another fertile ground for uncontrolled spending."

On Wednesday, citing Inos' report of an \$8.7 million drop in estimated revenue, Fitial rejected the Legislature's proposed \$165.4 million budget for FY 2009.

ka flights to other destinations such as Guam, however, and the decision by Northwest Airlines and major travel agents to price the Osaka-Saipan flight at a very aggressive low seat price resulted in the Osaka flight not being profitable for Northwest.

Northwest Airlines is one of the world's largest airlines with hubs at Detroit, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Memphis, Tokyo and Amsterdam, and approximately 1,400 daily departures.

Northwest Airlines is a member of SkyTeam, an airline alliance that offers customers one of the world's most extensive global networks. Northwest Airlines and its travel partners serve more than 900 cities in excess of 160 countries on six continents.

Last April Northwest Airlines agreed to a stock-swap merger with Delta Air Lines that created the world's biggest carrier.

In a memo sent last week to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial about revenue sources for Fiscal Year 2009, Finance Secretary Eloy S. Inos quoted an MVA report that Northwest Airlines' Osaka-Saipan route contributes approximately \$112 million into the CNMI economy.

He said the direct government revenue loss from the termination of this direct air service will amount to at least \$3.5 million.

Northwest Airlines first temporarily suspended its Osaka-Saipan flight on Oct. 28, 2006, also as a result of low profitability on the route. It revived the daytime service on Dec. 20, 2007.

The carrier's Osaka-Saipan flight was first launched in October 2005, and was well received by Japanese travelers from Osaka, flying consistently 80-100 percent full.

Severe price competition from Osa-

NWA

From Page 1

But Parsons said the decision to suspend the service does not mean that Northwest Airlines has lost faith in the CNMI as a destination for tourists from Japan.

"We remain committed to the Saipan market by continuing daily services from Nagoya and Narita and one stop service from Osaka via Narita. We will review this market again as economic conditions improve," he added.

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio said the shelving of the route is a blow to the Commonwealth's tourism industry.

"The decision of the NWA will have a significant negative economic implication to the CNMI despite the presence of Asiana Airlines," he said.

2 WANT

From Page 2

dent aliens can be deported upon being convicted of a felony, two or more misdemeanors, any crime of moral turpitude, or any firearms control offense.

Deleon Guerrero and Torres stated in the bill that the drug trafficking has resulted in irrevocable harm to families and has added to the financial burden borne by CNMI citizens associated with investigating, prosecuting, defending, incarcerating and, in a rapidly increasing number of cases, deporting, drug offenders.

"This legislation aims to minimize the harm visited upon the Commonwealth by the illegal drug trade and deter future drug offenses by allowing the deportation of nonresident aliens who have been formally charged with the possession or trafficking of illicit drugs," the lawmakers said.

Deleon Guerrero and Torres

MAN

From Page 1

Dolores St., where an electric pole with a transformer sits right next to a big breadfruit tree inside a private residence.

Witnesses in the area told the *Saipan Tribune* that the victim had earlier asked permission to climb the tree, the top of which was higher than the power pole.

They said the victim was using a stick made of steel or aluminum, which apparently hit the live wire, and he died instantly from the electric shock.

Witnesses said that rescuers spent about over an hour trying to take the

Villagomez: Local Nursing Board will improve

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the recent relocation of the Women's, Infants and Children's program to its own building on Navy Hill, Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez

hopes the added space and staff help will ease complaints against the Saipan Board of Nursing.

The Board is tasked with approving professional certifications for nurses but many applicants complain of calls going unanswered or returned.

Currently, Villagomez said, there is only one full time staff member to answer phones. But with the WIC relocation he is hoping to move the Nursing Board to the main hospital, which will allow greater flexibility in answering phones.

"If one staff member is not there, other people can be covering to answer phone," he said.

The bulk of the calls come from the mainland United States and some people are not cognizant of the time difference, he added.

"But that's not an excuse and should not be an excuse," Villagomez said.

"We should be able to answer all those calls and address those needs, and we are moving in that direction. Things should be resolved by next year."



Villagomez

Many nurses from the Philippines regularly e-mail the *Saipan Tribune* seeking help from the newspaper because, they write, they do not know what else to do.

Villagomez said the new budget allows for increased staffing in order for the Board to answer all the phone calls. But, he added, even if the budget isn't passed the hospital will improve the situation.

Tudela promotes NMI in trip to Japan, China

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela recently visited Okinawa, Japan and two key cities in China, a trip that he said gave him the opportunity to promote not only Saipan but also the rest of the CNMI as a premier tourist destination.

Tudela's trip took place from Nov. 28 to Dec. 11. With him was staff member Jose DLC. Tenorio.

The mayor attended the presentation of the Meritorious Recognition Award to Choken Ginoza, chairman for the Micronesian Repatriation Association of Okinawa, which was held at Nishi Naha City.

The association was organized more than 30 years ago and its members have been coming to Saipan at least once or twice a year to honor and pray for their countrymen who died on Saipan and Tinian during World War II.

During the Okinawa trip, Tudela said they were toured to ancient monuments and other historic sites such as the cemetery of WWII military officers.

From Japan, Tudela and Tenorio participated in the second Global Outsourcing Summit 2008, held Dec. 4-6 in Zhengzhou, China.

From there, they went to Chengdu City for the fourth International Cooperation Summit for CEOs and Provincial Governors and Mayors. This event, held Dec. 7-9, focused on the special investment project called "Reconstructing Sichuan" with the help of international business community.

"I was privileged to promote Saipan as a popular resort destination to tourists from Japan, Korea and China, because of our distinct crystal clear and clean beaches," Tudela said.

The Prime Minister of France, two chiefs of staff of two former French presidents and the global vice chairman of the Asia-Pacific CEO Association also spoke at the summit.

There were also in-depth discussions about the current financial crisis throughout Asia followed by viewpoints from political leaders around the world, provincial governors and mayors and business leaders.

Reconstruction of Sichuan City and as well as economic opportunities for the transfer of the global manufacturing and service industry to China were some of the main topics.

Tudela noted that because of

the impact of the Asian recession, economic opportunities for Pacific islands differ greatly from one part of the region to another.

"I also touched about the eventual departure of our textile manufacturers, which is one factor of the local economy's downturn," he said.

He told participants that the CNMI benefited from globalization in the form of its

thriving textile industry starting from 1980s until January 2005 when some fundamental changes in import quotas for textiles was dictated by the Multi-Fiber Agreement and

other trade liberalization rules that went into effect.

"These changes made it possible for the developing world like China, to increase trade flows and take advantage of lower

labor and production costs compared to Northern Marianas and Saipan," Tudela told participants.

He told them that the lifting of trade quotas made it possible for China to sell more textiles and garments than before in markets such as the U.S., while at the same time decimating competition in such places as Saipan.

He told participants that the CNMI is leaning more and



Tudela



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Peter Jeffrey Seman Camacho on graduating with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Guam and for your commissioning as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army! "We're very proud of you on your great accomplishments! We love you!" Greetings come from Mom, Dad, Encharing, Diwi, Weischibw, Joshua, Junior, Nadia, Jina, Ray, Lemat Gang, Echaluse family and SiAna.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

START 2009 WITH VALUE LIKE NO OTHER!

iConnect's

\$20.09

PREPAID DEAL

Get the i415 for only **\$20.09** with \$12.50 airtime value.

NEW YEAR 2009

CONNECT

Saipan - Guam Office 888.8888 / www.icconnectsaipan.com

Offer good only from December 26, 2008 to January 15, 2009. Conditions apply.

i415
Color Display
Voice Dialing
Java Enabled
Polyphonic Ringtone
600 Contacts

Opinion

Hafa Adali

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 362

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The Christmas spirit, 2008: Warm feelings in a cold season

In describing the time and the empire into which Jesus of Nazareth was born, a famous historian had this to say regarding religion and the state: "The various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful."

"And thus," wrote Edward Gibbon in his classic 18th-century account of the Roman Empire's decline and fall, "toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord."

Americans today have a much less jaundiced view of religion than did Gibbon, who wrote in his final chapter, "I have described the triumph of barbarism and religion." But in its civic arrangements, this country has come, over time, to adopt some of the more beneficial elements of such a "Roman" view of church, state and belief, especially in the areas of toleration and mutual indulgence. True, there is still constant friction over numerous issues, from aiding church schools to public prayer to zoning for suburban megachurches. And especially at Christmastime, the past half-century has brought hundreds of disputes: over displays of creches, crosses and even menorahs, among other things. Yet on this most symbolic day, it seems to us that there's been a lessening of these tensions in recent years, a growing spirit of "concord" that encourages believers of all sorts—and nonbelievers as well—to make what they will of this season in particular and to share in its universal sentiments.

More than one argumentative village atheist has pointed out that Christmas probably doesn't just happen to come at the same time of year as the pagan solstice festivals, and of course it does have some of the trappings of those ancient winter observances. But there's also an element of charity, compassion and companionship in Christmas that can take it to a different level. It has to do with giving, not only to family but to friends and strangers, and with reaching out to others. This is a reflection, no doubt, of the holiday's spiritual side, but it has meaning to just about everyone, regardless of religion. In this cold season, when increasing numbers of people are out of work, wondering how to pay for heat and food and seeking to get through a rough period, there's a greater need for it than there has been in years, whether you call it Christmas spirit or simply peace on Earth, good will to all.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post



A bold stimulus

By JON S. CORZINE
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

When New York Gov. Franklin Delano Roosevelt delivered a commencement address at Oglethorpe University in May 1932, the economic crisis that had befallen the United States three years earlier had already morphed into the Great Depression: One in four Americans was out of work, banks were failing at a rate of 10 per week and the gross national product was at half its pre-crash level.

FDR called on the federal government to "correct, by drastic means if necessary, the faults in our economic system." The times called for "bold, persistent experimentation," he declared.

Strictly by the numbers, today's economic crisis is, fortunately, not as severe as the Great Depression was. But that's cold comfort to the millions of Americans who have lost their jobs, homes, health care and retirement savings. We are living through the toughest times since the 1930s. People reasonably expect government to act boldly.

I've spoken at length about the current economic crisis with other governors, including Deval Patrick, Mass., David Paterson, N.Y., Jim Doyle, Wis., Jennifer Granholm, Mich., and Ted Strickland, Ohio. We agree that our states—however diverse they may be—have similar needs and problems that should be addressed by the economic recovery package being developed in Washington. That can best be achieved if Congress and the new administration keep in mind the following principles:

First, the states, local governments and the federal government must be full partners in the recovery process. Working with counties and municipalities, states have mechanisms in place to pump stimulus funds into the economy quickly and responsibly. But we don't have the federal government's financial capacity or borrowing authority. Any recovery effort should reflect our mutual strengths.

Second, the package should be large. Some estimates put the cost of the economic crisis next year at \$700 billion, or about 4 percent of gross domestic product. To offset this, the cumulative value of the stimulus plan should be \$1 trillion over two years. This is a large sum, but if the spending is executed effectively, it should be a significant investment in our country's physical and human resources that will pay long-term dividends while also creating and saving jobs.

The stimulus should be roughly divided into five categories: infrastructure, countercyclical programs, housing, education block grants and middle-class tax cuts.

■ For every billion dollars we spend on infrastructure, we can put upwards of 20,000 people back to work. On one hand, we've learned painful lessons about the need to modernize our bridges and levees. On the other hand, we must think broadly about the idea of infrastructure: How many hours do people waste circling airports because our air-traffic control systems are outdated? We must com-

mit to improving our transportation system, energy grid, Internet technology, ports, public housing and school facilities.

■ Unless we also help states shore up their safety-net social programs, the economic impact of the federal stimulus will be negated.

Most states are constitutionally required to balance their budgets. Given the sharp decline in state revenue, we are not able to support, let alone increase, spending to meet growing demands for basic needs such as unemployment insurance, food assistance programs and health care—including mental-health services to those with developmental disabilities.

Most states are facing cuts to these essential services, reductions that will exact an enormous toll on our most vulnerable citizens and remove money and jobs from the economy just when we need to promote growth. Put another way, even if the federal government dedicates a large sum to infrastructure, cutbacks in state and local safety-net programs would cancel out much of the effect of the stimulus.

Over two years, the federal government should boost its countercyclical spending by at least \$250 billion. It can do so by increasing the Federal Medical Assistance Percentages; the federal share of Medicaid costs; and other health-care-related programs such as reimbursement to hospitals for treating the uninsured, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and child-care grants.

Many state unemployment trust funds are already depleted. Rising unemployment rates and reduced revenue over the next few months are likely to trigger major payroll tax increases in 2009. This harm could be partly mitigated by doubling proposed federal funding for state unemployment trust funds under the Unemployment Insurance Modernization Act, which would provide incentives to cover vulnerable low-wage and part-time workers who are often denied benefits.

■ Unless we strike at the cause of the meltdown—the collapse of the housing market—our economy will continue spiraling downward. The federal recovery package should include funding for state housing mortgage authorities and for programs that help people restructure their mortgages, stay in their homes and find new shelter if evicted.

■ If we are to pursue relief (begin ital) and (end ital) recovery, it's essential that we continue developing a workforce that is able to meet the demands of the 21st-century economy. At least \$250 billion in preschool-through-college education block grants would help states meet their school budget obligations; more important, such grants would enable greater strides toward universal early childhood education and fully funded programs for special-needs students—improving the situation today and laying the foundation for a better tomorrow.

■ A sizable middle-class tax cut is key. Over the past decade, median family income has failed to keep pace with inflation, especially given the sharply rising costs of health care and education. Most Americans have lost ground. Relief for the middle class would help

See A BOLD on Page 7

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Island hopping

If Santa was even jollier than usual Thursday as he made his procedure turn over Marpi, it’s easy to see why: The grizzled old aviator has seen fuel prices plunge. Flying was never cheap, but at least it’s a lot cheaper now.

It’s a good excuse to relish this blessing: The Commonwealth offers some of the world’s greatest flying. You sure can’t beat the scenery. Or the weather (typhoons notwithstanding).

Here’s a question I get on a regular basis: Is it viable for someone, or some association of someones, on Saipan to own and operate their own aircraft so they can island hop for business or pleasure?

Short answer: Sure. Longer answer: If you don’t do it with an obsessive and intelligent focus on safety, you’re better off trading your aviator shades for an iPod.

I can’t do justice to this field in a brief column. Nor is this a how-to guide. It’s what I’d tell you if you bought me a cup of coffee, so here’s 14 ounces of caffeinated hangar talk:

1. What about helicopters? Well, they’re lots of fun, but they’re no place for the tenderfoot. If you need a copter, charter one.
2. How about airplanes? They’re very doable. Flying between Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam is straightforward and fun; Pagan is a special case and is excluded from my context here.

Personally, over water, for anything longer than a Saipan to/from Tinian route, my preference in airplanes is for a multi-engine airplane (as opposed to a single-engine airplane.) At the smallest, most affordable end of that spectrum, the family sedan breed of these craft are known as “light twins,” which generally seat from four to six people (including the driver).

Greatest gift: Father’s safe return

By JAMES WAGNER
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

The greatest Christmas present I have ever received came two days early and with a rough beard. It was my father, weary and unshaven, after five days as a hostage.

He and my mother left our home in Lima, Peru, on Dec. 17, 1996, to attend a party at the Japanese Embassy in honor of the Japanese emperor’s birthday. My mother returned later that night.

My father didn’t.

A lanky and reserved man, my father grew up in Ohio but left to see the world and serve his country in the U.S. Foreign Service. In 1996, he was a political counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Peru.

My parents weren’t eager to attend the event that night. It was their wedding anniversary, so they contemplated skipping the bash to celebrate privately rather than attend a 700-person party. But my mother, a good diplomat’s wife, did not want my father to be reprimanded at work for missing a political gathering.

My parents had just arrived when a bomb exploded. Then a gun battle broke out between the terrorists and the police. The guests, including my parents, rushed inside the residence—a white mansion—for cover.

This was supposed to be a safer and different Peru from the 1980s, when terrorist organizations, notably the Maoist Shining Path, regularly disrupted life with car bombs and assassinations. But the clampdown on terrorism had not ended it completely, as my parents discovered on that warm December night.

On the other side of the city, my sister and I, 12 and 10 respec-

A light twin typically has one piston-engine on each wing and is propeller-driven.

My favorite of the breed is the Piper Seminole, just because I’ve always had so much fun in them. But other worthy offerings include the Piper Aztec, Piper Seneca, and Beech Baron.

As for acquisition costs, I don’t track light twin costs regularly, and, as you can imagine, there are a lot of variables involved. I called my pals at an airport in Florida that does a lot of overhauls and repairs, and was advised that \$130,000 to \$160,000 or so would be at the lower end of the spectrum (but not at the very bottom end) for a very used one suitable for fair-weather island duty; listings I’ve seen have ranged from about \$55,000 to almost a half a million bucks, so take your pick.

As for operating costs (fuel, oil, insurance, spare parts, maintenance, repairs, pilot salary and/or training, hanger or ramp space, etc.), these will range in the three digits (i.e. hundreds of dollars) per flight hour. Generic numbers for this can really get you in trouble, you have to take each case on its own specifics. For the sake of mentioning it, I’ll note that rental rates in the mainland, where fuel is a lot cheaper, are typically about \$230 per flight hour on up for light twins, but those guys have economies of scale that you probably can’t match.

As for actually flying the craft, you need to have the appropriate pilot’s license or, of course, hire a pilot who does. Small airplane pilots frequently have pretty low salaries. Your mechanic, per hour, will cost you a lot more than your pilot will, unless you had the foresight to hire a “pilot/mechanic,” that is, somebody with both flavors

tively, were watching television at home. The maid, who watched us when my parents were away, heard a faint explosion in the distance and rushed us to bed, fearing something was amiss. I heard nothing.

My parents weren’t strangers to violence. My mother grew up in Nicaragua as the country was torn apart by civil war. My father was shot in the leg and left for dead at a shopping center one night in Venezuela after three thieves stole our family car. My parents knew how to react on hearing explosions. Inside the mansion, they took cover near an interior wall.

Soon after the bullets stopped flying at the Embassy, the police began firing tear gas. The terrorists, members of the Marxist Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru, pulled on gas masks and held the guests hostage with machine guns and rocket launchers. After hours of waiting in the hot and packed house, the terrorists let the women go. My mother cried and resisted, not wanting to abandon my father, but she was made to leave.

The next few days were a blur. Our home phone never stopped ringing, and family friends took turns answering it. The U.S. ambassador’s wife sent a daily pot of matzo ball soup to my mother—a comfort food she sorely needed. My older brother flew in from college in Philadelphia. The several hundred men who remained as hostages after the women were released spent their days praying, reading, playing cards and sleeping. At times, my father later said, he was even bored. The terrorists hoped to trade the hostages for their jailed comrades. They were patient.

Other than having been held at gunpoint, my father was not mistreated by the terrorists. I learned later that for those five days, he

ness of these hard times, such performers shine as bright lights of hope and promise. They prove that while a few people bring pain and misery to our community, exponentially more bring joy and happiness.

In particular, much thanks and credit go to their maestro, Will DeWitt, whose talent, leadership, and passion have cultivated and inspired a new generation of amazing musicians. Our community is only better because of him and his performers.

Bravo!

Galvin Deleon Guerrero
Member, CNMI Board of Education

elected them into office.

The predicaments we the people of the Commonwealth face today is the result of years of ignorance, self-interest and a lack of basic knowledge to understand the difference between what is right and wrong and in the best interest for our people.

Our homeland is not moving forward to better times; instead we are at the edge of the cliff at the end of tunnel.

Gregorio Cruz Jr.
President, Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.

By ED STEPHENS JR.
Special to the Tribune



Ed is a pilot, economist, and writer. He holds a degree in economics from UCLA and is a former U.S. naval officer. His column runs every Friday. Visit Ed at TropicalEd.com and SaipanBlog.com.

of license which, on Saipan, would be a smart move.

Can you team up with the buddies to buy and operate an airplane? Yes indeed. Owner-operated airplanes typically spend very few hours aloft, so it can make a lot of sense to share costs of ownership and operations. But if you think a shotgun wedding will strain a relationship, wait until you find yourself in an aircraft partnership.

Can you subsidize your aircraft by charging the public to fly it places? The quick answer is no; not without meeting a lot of serious regulatory requirements which you probably don’t want to mess with.

As you may know, I have a smattering of flying photos at TropicalEd.com. My latest ride is the Airbus A300, but I haven’t posted any pictures yet (sorry).

Well, I’m done with that coffee you bought me. Here’s to blue skies, and in paradise, no less.

sat in the same room with 50 or so men, who became increasingly smelly with no change of clothes. The Red Cross brought food and water, vital necessities after the electricity was cut the second day. My father was one of seven Americans held.

During my father’s captivity, I wrote him a note on stationery provided by the Red Cross. I told him I was having fun with friends but missed him and loved him and wanted him to come home soon. The Red Cross sent it along with a package of clothing prepared by my mother. He never received either of our offerings.

At school, I was faced with tough reminders. Classmates asked questions. My fifth-grade teacher pulled me aside and offered a hug. I never cried at school, although people’s facial expressions seemed prepared to take it. Because I was new, I soon became known as the “American hostage’s son.” I had little to say after a while. I guess I was in shock.

On Dec. 23, my father later told us, a priest who was one of the hostages held Mass, standing in a stairwell in front of a window riddled with bullet holes. One of the captors stood guard with a machine gun. Soon after, a list of names was read, including my father’s. The named men were sent to another room, with no idea whether they would be killed or released.

Later that day, my family and I huddled around the television hoping for news. The kidnapers had announced the release of more hostages, and we scanned the faces of the men lined up to board buses home until my mother and sister spotted my father. We cheered. My mother cried and thanked God. The phone started ringing.

The released hostages were taken to a hospital to be examined, and I had to go to bed before my father’s return. The next morning, I woke up early, filled with anticipation. I popped my head into my parents’ bedroom and was relieved to find my father asleep next to my mother where he belonged.

He was home.

My grandfather spoke to a local newspaper in Ohio the day after my father’s release. “I’ve been hoping for this ever since this all happened,” he said. “Christmas is over for me.”

My grandfather needed no other present that year. And neither did I.

Wagner is a staff member of the Times editorial pages.

A BOLD
From Page 6

our families weather the storm and also boost economic demand.






In 1932, Roosevelt warned against being of “faint heart, fearful of change, sitting tightly on the rooftops in the flood.” His words are still prescient today. We must be bold—\$1 trillion bold. America has abundant resources and a generous, ambitious spirit. If we work together, we’ll emerge stronger and more prosperous than ever.

The writer, a Democrat, is governor of New Jersey.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲83 ▼76
Palau	Showers	▲86 ▼77
Yap	Partly Sunny	▲90 ▼76
Chuuk	Showers	▲89 ▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85 ▼76
Kosrae	Showers	▲89 ▼77
Majuro	Showers	▲84 ▼77

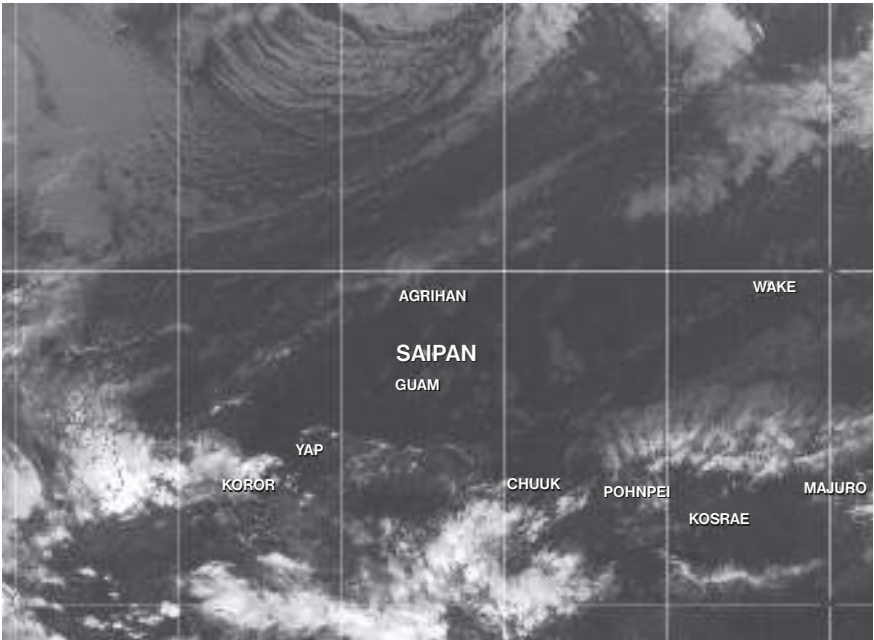
Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲71 ▼62
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲39 ▼18
Hong Kong	Rain	▲68 ▼63
Honolulu	Showers	▲78 ▼70
London	Cloudy	▲43 ▼32
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲62 ▼44
Manila	Cloudy	▲85 ▼73
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲83 ▼65
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲79 ▼69
New York	Rain	▲52 ▼47
Osaka	Rain	▲46 ▼38
Paris	Sunny	▲35 ▼25
Pusan	Sunny	▲48 ▼32
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲45 ▼24
Salem	Rain	▲46 ▼35
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲54 ▼45
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲41 ▼27
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲56 ▼41
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲59 ▼51

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
1:37AM Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet
8:59AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
2:08PM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
6:32PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, DEC. 26, 2008

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends from 25N155E southwestward to 20N140E then beyond 130E at 14N. Cloudiness and patchy rain are along and up to 250 miles northwest of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from 2N130E to 3N135E then to the equator at 145E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are around Palau and south of Yap in an area from 8N132E to 5N145E to EQ148E to EQ140E back to 8N132E. A trough extends northeastward from EQ158E to 8N162E. Convergence associated with the trough is causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms in two areas. One area is well south of Chuuk within 75 miles of a line from 1N151E to 4N156E. The second area is across Pohnpei and Kosrae from 7N156E to 10N166E to 1N160E back to 7N156E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:41AM	5:55 PM
Sunday	6:42AM	5:56 PM
Monday	6:42AM	5:56 PM
Tuesday	6:42AM	5:57 PM
Wednesday	6:43AM	5:57 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:18AM	5:38 PM
Sunday	7:07AM	6:30 PM
Monday	7:52AM	7:22 PM
Tuesday	8:34AM	8:13 PM
Wednesday	9:13AM	9:02 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

- CAMPUS BULLETIN
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
 - Fax: (670) 235-3740
 - Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
 - Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$182. Off-island subscription rate is \$376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2008

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
Saipan-Rota CO9597 11:50am 12:25pm 1,7	Rota-Saipan CO 9598 3:25am 4:00am 5,6
Saipan-Guam CO9317 5:00am 5:50am Daily CO9313 8:30am 9:20am Daily CO9597 11:50am 1:20pm 1,7 via Rota CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6 CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily	Guam-Saipan CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am 1,2,3,4,7 CO9598 2:30am 4:00am 5,6 via Rota CO9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily CO9600 10:20am 11:10am Daily CO9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily CO9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily CO9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita NW 099 5:00am 7:40am Daily NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily NW 075 4:55pm 7:30pm Daily	Narita-Saipan NW 076 10:15am 2:40pm Daily NW 077 6:25pm 1:25am+1 Daily NW 100 8:45pm 1:15am+1 Daily
Saipan-Osaka OZ 119 4:00am 6:40am 1,4,6 NW 083 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily	Osaka-Saipan OZ 120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 3,5,7 NW 084 10:40am 3:10pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya NW 078 8:25am 11:05am Daily	Nagoya-Saipan NW 077 9:00pm 1:25am+1 Daily
Saipan-Incheon OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7 OZ 606 3:20pm 7:00pm Daily	Incheon-Saipan OZ 605 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ 603 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ 603 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan OZ 608 3:50am 7:20am 1,4,5,7	Busan-Saipan OZ 607 9:30pm 2:40am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Shanghai FM 844 2:50am 5:40am 2,6	Shanghai-Saipan FM 843 7:15pm 1:50am+1 1,5
Rota-Guam CO 9597 12:50pm 1:20pm 1,7	Guam-Rota CO 9598 2:30am 3:00am 5,6
Guam-Manila CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 3,5 via Koror CO 933 8:00pm 9:40pm Daily PR 111 6:00am 7:50am 1,2,4,6,7	Manila-Guam CO 892 10:10pm 5:30am+1 3,5 via Koror CO 934 11:10pm 4:40am+1 Daily PR 110 10:10pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100 7:00am 7:30am Daily				FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100 7:50am 8:20am Daily				FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200 9:00am 9:30am Daily				FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200 9:50am 10:15am Daily				Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300 4:00pm 4:30pm Daily				FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300 4:50pm 5:25pm Daily				FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400 6:00pm 6:30pm Daily				FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400 6:45pm 7:15pm Daily				FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101 6:45am 6:55am Daily				FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103 7:30am 7:40am Daily				FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105 8:00am 8:10am Daily				FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107 8:40am 8:50am Daily				FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109* 9:10am 9:20am Daily							
FRE 111* 10:45am 10:55am Daily							



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Schedule of Religious Services														
CATHOLIC														
Mt. Carmel Cathedral Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm Monday-Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm														
Korean Center Sunday: 10:30am Wednesday: 10am Thursday-Friday: 8pm Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm														
Kristo Rai Parish Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am Monday- Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm Saturday: 6am and 6pm														
Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish Wednesday Mass: 6pm First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm Saturday Mass: 6pm Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am														
Saint Jude Parish Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm														
San Antonio Parish Sunday: 6am and 8am Tuesday and Friday: 6pm														
San Francisco de Borja-Rota Sunday: 6am and 8am Monday-Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6pm														
San Isidro-Rota Sunday: 5am and 10am Monday-Wednesday: 7pm Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm														
San Jose (Oleai) Parish Sunday: 6am and 7:30am Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm														
San Roque Parish Sunday: 9am Wednesday: 6pm Saturday: 10:30am														
San Vicente Parish Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm Monday-Saturday: 6pm														
Santa Remedios Sunday: 7:30am Tuesday: 6pm Saturday: 10am-Baptism														
Santa Soledad Sunday: 7:30am														
PROTESTANT														
Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am Sunday School for Children: 10-11am Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm														
Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan Sunday School: 9am Sunday Morning Worship: 10am Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm														
Chinese Christian Church of Saipan Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm														
Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan Worship/Study Opportunities Adult Sunday School: 9am Youth Sunday School: 9am English Worship Service Sunday: 10am Sunday Service: 5:30pm Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm; Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm Mid-week Service: 7:30pm Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm														
Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan St. Paul's Episcopal Church Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau, Call 235-0545 for directions														
Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan Worship Service: 9am GBI Classes: 4-6pm Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am Sunday: 7am Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm														
Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog) Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English) Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog) Sunday: 6:45am (English) Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)														
Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville Sunday Services 9:00 AM Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158 Pastor JJ Matsumoto														
Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation) Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal 8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)														
9:15am-Sunday School Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church) Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)														
Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan English Service: 9-11am, Sunday Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday														
Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan Sunday School: 8:20am Sunday Adult: 10am Sunday Adult: 11:30am Sunday Evening: 7:30pm Wednesday: 8pm														
Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan Sunday Worship Service: 10am-12noon Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)														
Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan English Worship Service: 9-10:30am Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm English Sunday School: 11am-12pm Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: English, 7pm-8pm Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm														
Missions Connection Ministry Every Sunday Celebrations: 10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog) Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm Youth Impact Friday: 7pm Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm														
Northern Marianas Christian Church Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided) Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620														
Saipan Bible Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30-10am Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm														
Saipan Christian Church Sunday: 7:30am-10am Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting) Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)														
Saipan Church of Christ Sunday Bible Class: 9am Sunday Worship: 10am Sunday Worship English: 6pm Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm														
Saipan Community Church (Sunday Services) Palau Service: 7:30am-9am English Service: 10am-11:30am Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm														
Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan (Saturday Church Services) Sabbath School Program: 9-10am Lesson Study: 10-10:40am Divine Service: 11-12pm Visitation: 3-4pm Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm Sundown Worship: 6-7pm														
First Baptist Church (Formerly Saipan Baptist Church) Afetna St., San Antonio Sunday <table><tr><td></td><td>9am</td><td>Sunday school</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>10am</td><td>Regular worship</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>6pm</td><td>worship</td></tr></table> Wednesday <table><tr><td></td><td>7pm</td><td>worship</td></tr></table> Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. McLure at 234-1939/235-7779.				9am	Sunday school		10am	Regular worship		6pm	worship		7pm	worship
	9am	Sunday school												
	10am	Regular worship												
	6pm	worship												
	7pm	worship												
Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center Phone 234-0209 New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches. Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi Service Times Sunday 10:00am Worship Service Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service Saturday 10:00am Evangelism														
Upper Room International Ministries Sunday 5:30 a.m-6:30 a.m Morning prayer <table><tr><td>7am-9am</td><td>English service</td></tr><tr><td>7am-9am</td><td>Sunday school</td></tr><tr><td>10am-12noon</td><td>English service,</td></tr></table> Koblerville Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church Gualo Rai, Saipan			7am-9am	English service	7am-9am	Sunday school	10am-12noon	English service,						
7am-9am	English service													
7am-9am	Sunday school													
10am-12noon	English service,													
Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30am Sunday AM Worship:10:30am Sunday PM Worship:7:00am Wed Worship: 7:30pm Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S														

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Dec. 27, 2000

Couple in \$100,000 savings scam nabbed
Police arrested on Christmas eve two men who allegedly swindled 43 Chinese garment factory workers over \$100,000 in what authorities described as the biggest savings scam on the island. Investigation showed that Lin Zu Xiu, owner of Zhida Free Market, and her husband Li Rui Yuan have been collecting money from workers of Mirage Garment Factory and L&T Garment Factory. Some of the victims have been depositing their money at Zhida Free Market as early as January 1999. The victims complained that both Xiu and Yuan promised the workers they will earn 10 percent in interest for their deposit in Zhida Free Market. Others were told their deposits will earn \$100,000 in interest every month.

Dec. 27, 2001

‘\$84-M CIP funds remain untapped’
Not only has the CNMI government failed to draw down at least \$10 million in federal money since 2000 but it also failed to tap \$74 million worth of Capitol Improvement Project money, which remains untouched up to the moment. This was disclosed yesterday by Rep. William S. Torres, even as he expressed apprehension that this situation could negatively impact on the CNMI’s capacity to bargain for higher CIP funding during the upcoming Covenant 702 negotiations next year. Torres, who will chair the House Committee on US and Foreign Relations in the 13th Legislature, said he had a long talk with Bob Schwabach Thursday last week, during which he found out that the CNMI government has not been fully utilizing CIP funds “for reasons that remain unknown.”

Dec. 27, 2002

CPA eyeing more revenue sources
The Commonwealth Ports Authority is currently evaluating proposals that would expand its car rental services at the Francisco Ada/Saipan International Airport in hopes of generating more funds for the airport division. CPA Executive Director Carlos H. Salas said plans to increase the car rental services at the airport are still being evaluated as the ports authority had just received proposals from two more firms. Salas said the CPA is also looking at ways on how to reduce the prices of the car rental services to encourage more firms to compete with the two existing car rental companies at the airport. Presently, only Hertz and Dollar Car Rentals are providing services at the airport.

Dec. 27, 2003

PSS ready to open Rota classes on Jan. 6
Rota schools will be ready to open classes on Jan. 6 as scheduled, according to Board of Education chairman Herman T. Guerrero. Guerrero said that, based on the latest reports reaching him, Rota Junior High School, which was hardest hit by supertyphoon Pongsona, has power now. “We’re moving aggressively for Rota. Power is up and ready at the Junior High. We’re working now with the High School and hopefully we could have it activated by end of this week. We’re confident that we can open the schools by Jan. 6,” said Guerrero.

Business

Holiday season magnifies shoppers’ frugality in ’08

NEW YORK (AP)—After limping through a holiday season expected to be the worst in decades, the nation’s stores made it to Christmas with little to celebrate.

For many merchants, the winter and beyond are likely to get even bleaker, because Americans are too worried about their jobs and the recession to do much shopping.

“We had to take a step back and reorganize our priorities and realize that it’s not all about money and gifts,” said Michelle Leary, 31, a mother of four from Wakefield, Mass. Her husband, an office manager at a construction company, was laid off three weeks ago.

“It made us take a look back and see what was really important to us,” Leary said.

Over the past year, shoppers have drastically changed their spending habits in ways not seen since the 1970s, switching to store brands and discounters like Wal-Mart. During the holiday shopping season, they cut back on their spending, took advantage of big discounts and bought practical gifts.

“Last year, when things were a little bit better, if there was stupid little things you think someone might like, you grab it for them,” said Bruce Guckert, 23, a carpenter from Everett, Mass., who was out shopping on Wednesday. “This year, you get them things they might need, or want more than others.”

One of the big worries for stores is what to do with the mounds of items they still have to sell. If 75 percent off before Dec. 25 didn’t make people splurge, will even bigger deals afterward do the trick? Another problem is that shoppers shunned gift cards this season. That means they are less likely to return to the stores after the holiday.

“The new consumer mantra for this coming year is: If I don’t need it, I won’t buy it,” said C. Britt Beemer, chairman of America’s Research Group. “America has going from a consuming society to a planned-buying society. Everything is focused on saving more money.”

The retail industry could be looking at its biggest contraction in 35 years, according to Burt P. Flickinger, III, managing director of consulting firm Strategic Resource Group. He estimates that 160,000 stores will have closed in 2008 and predicts that an additional 200,000 will shutter next year. In March and April of 2009, Flickinger expects 2,000 to 3,000 malls to shutter. A number of stores struggled just to make it to Christmas.

Some Jews fear Madoff case stokes anti-Semitism

NEW YORK (AP)—Of all the words that have been used to describe the Bernard L. Madoff scandal, the most emotionally charged may be “Jewish.”

The disgraced investment guru is accused of orchestrating a \$50 billion Ponzi scheme that preyed heavily on fellow Jews and ultimately drained the fortunes of numerous Jewish charities and institutions.

There’s nothing new about con artists targeting their own kind. There’s even a word for it—affinity fraud—and it has struck numerous religious, ethnic and professional groups.

But the allegations against Madoff are particularly wrenching for some in the Jewish community, who fear that the sensational case is fanning vicious stereotypes about Jews that go back to the Middle Ages.

The Anti-Defamation League cites a spike in anti-Semitic comments online after Madoff’s Dec. 11 arrest. A columnist for the Israeli newspaper Haaretz lamented the case as “the answer to every Jew-hater’s wish list.”

And the American Jewish Committee’s executive director, David A. Harris, wrote a letter to *The New York Times* criticizing what he saw as “a striking emphasis” on Madoff’s faith in one of the paper’s many stories about the scandal.

The case is “fodder for the bigots,” Abraham H. Foxman, the ADL’s national director, said in an interview this week with The Associated Press. “It’s both embarrassing and it’s painful.”

It’s difficult to describe the case in any detail without mentioning Madoff’s religion. The 70-year-old money manager and former Nasdaq stock market chairman donated hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, much of it to Jewish causes. And many of the known victims of his business, Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities, are big names in Jewish life.

Yeshiva University, one of the nation’s foremost Jewish institutions of higher education, lost \$110 million; Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America, lost \$90 million; director Steven Spielberg’s Wunderkinder Foundation acknowledged unspecified losses; and a \$15 million foundation established by Holocaust survivor and writer Elie Wiesel was wiped out. Jewish federations and hospitals have lost millions and some foundations have had to close.

Nation

Man in Santa suit kills 8, self on Christmas Eve

COVINA, Calif. (AP)—Stinging from an acrimonious divorce, a man plotting revenge against his ex-wife dressed up like Santa, went to his former in-laws' Christmas Eve party and slaughtered at least eight people before killing himself hours later.

Bruce Pardo's ex-wife and her parents were believed to be among the dead. Investigators planned to return to the scene Friday and sift through the ashes of the home, which Pardo set ablaze using a bizarre home-made device that sprayed flammable liquid.

Pardo, 45, had no criminal record and no history of violence, according to police,



Bruce Jeffrey Pardo is seen in an undated photo provided Thursday, Dec. 25, 2008, by the Covina, Calif.

but he was angry following last week's settlement of his divorce after a marriage that

lasted barely a year.

"It was not an amicable divorce," police Lt. Pat Buchanan said.

Pardo chose to exact his revenge at the annual Christmas party his former in-laws held at their two-story home on a cul-de-sac in a quiet Covina neighborhood 25 miles east of Los Angeles.

"Christmases were that special time of the year, it meant so much to them," Rosa Ordaz, a family friend of the victims, told KCBS-TV.

In past years, a neighbor dressed as Santa Claus and entertained guests. But the neighbor had moved away and there

was no Santa—until Pardo arrived about 11:30 p.m.

The massacre began when an 8-year-old girl answered Pardo's knock at the door. Pardo, carrying what appeared to be a large present, pulled out a handgun and shot her in the face, then began shooting indiscriminately as about 25 partygoers tried to flee, police said.

A 16-year-old girl was

shot in the back, and a 20-year-old woman broke her ankle when she escaped by jumping from a second-story window. Those two, and the 8-year-old, remained hospitalized Christmas Day. All were expected to recover.

The gift-wrapped box Pardo was carrying actually contained a pressurized home-made device he used to spray

a liquid that quickly sent the house up in flames. Police said Pardo had recently worked in the aerospace industry.

David Salgado, a neighbor, said he saw the 8-year-old victim being escorted to an ambulance by four SWAT team members as flames up to 40 feet high consumed the house.

"It was really ugly," Salgado said.

Homeland Security forecasts five-year terrorism threats

WASHINGTON (AP)—The terrorism threat to the United States over the next five years will be driven by instability in the Middle East and Africa, persistent challenges to border security and increasing Internet savvy, says a new intelligence assessment obtained by The Associated Press.

Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attacks are considered the most dangerous threats that could be carried out against the U.S. But those threats are also the most unlikely because it is so difficult for al-Qaida and similar groups to

acquire the materials needed to carry out such plots, according to the internal Homeland Security Threat Assessment for the years 2008-2013.

The al-Qaida terrorist network continues to focus on U.S. attack targets vulnerable to massive economic losses, casualties and political "turmoil," the assessment said.

Earlier this month, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction remains "the highest priority at the federal level." Speaking to reporters on Dec.

3, Chertoff explained that more people, such as terrorists, will learn how to make dirty bombs, biological and chemical weapons. "The other side is going to continue to learn more about doing things," he said.

Marked "for official use only," the report does not specify its audience, but the assessments typically go to law enforcement, intelligence officials and the private sector. When determining threats, intelligence officials consider loss of life, economic and psychological consequences.

Obama visits military base on Christmas

KAILUA, Hawaii (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama visited military families while they ate Christmas Day dinner, thanking them for their service and posing for pictures.

Obama on Thursday visited Marine Corps Base Hawaii near his rented vacation home and briefly chatted with enlisted members who ate turkey, ham and roast beef. He didn't make formal remarks or speak to reporters during the stop, one of the few public sightings of the president-elect on what aides call a private family vacation.

"Hey," Obama said as he walked into the mess hall wearing a short-sleeved shirt and slacks. "Just wanted to

say 'hi.'"

Obama lingered a few minutes at each table as the Marines and sailors and their families stood to greet their next commander in chief. At other tables, the visitors ate candied sweet potatoes with marshmallow topping, mashed potatoes and simmered corn and broccoli.

"What part of Indiana?" he asked one person. To another: "This is the East Coast table, huh?"

Obama and his family planned to spend their Christmas holiday mostly out of sight, an accomplishment given his two-year, high-profile marathon to win the presidency.

Obama, wife Michelle and

their two young daughters opened presents earlier Thursday and planned their own dinner of turkey and ham, according to aides. They did not release any other details.

The Obamas arrived in Honolulu on Saturday with four aides, his Secret Service detail and a small group of journalists. Since then, he has been largely sequestered at the beachfront estate.

With less a month before Obama takes office on Jan. 20, he is taking every step possible to make sure this holiday is as private as possible—something he bemoaned while walking to a driving range last Sunday.

CAUTIONARY NOTICE

We, AL-Fakher for Tobacco Trading & Agencies Co., Ltd, P.O.Box 911145, Amman 11191, Jordan, are the proprietors of the Arabic and Latin character and device (trademark) hereunder:



This Trade Mark is used in respect of goods, in **Class (16)**: Paper, cardboard and goods made from these materials, not included in other classes; printed matter; bookbinding material; photographs; stationery; adhesives for stationery or household purposes; artists' materials; paint brushes; typewriters and office requisites (except furniture); instructional and teaching material (except apparatus); plastic materials for packaging (not included in other classes); printers' type; printing blocks and **Class (34)**: Tobacco; smokers' articles; matches.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to all concerned including dealers that any unauthorized use of the aforesaid trademark shall constitute acts prejudicial to the rights of our clients, the proprietors of the said trademark, and shall render such persons liable to civil as well as criminal proceedings.

Any person, company or firm caught or found imitating, copying, using, or infringing otherwise improperly using the above trademark without the permission of the proprietors or the owners shall be prosecuted in accordance with the implemented laws.

For further information please contact:

AL-Fakher for Tobacco Trading & Agencies Co., Ltd
C/O TRIMARK INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CONSULTING
P.O.Box 7780 Amman 11118 Jordan
Tel: +962-6-5528059/ 5528589
Fax: +962-6-551247
Email: info@trimarkip.com

ACROSS THE NATION

Kennedy, in Senate bid, hasn't shared finances

NEW YORK (AP)—At this time last year, Caroline Kennedy was promoting "A Family Christmas," her collection of essays that featured the memory of her father letting her use the White House switchboard to call Santa. This year, after warily stepping into the political free-for-all for Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's job, Kennedy's activities during the holiday season included fending off requests to disclose financial information. The calls for Kennedy to release her financial information, required of many public officials including

her uncle Massachusetts Sen. Edward Kennedy, come after a lifetime of carefully cultivated privacy. By all accounts a very wealthy woman who could be worth as much as \$400 million, Kennedy has said she will not release details of her finances unless Democratic Gov. David Paterson picks her for the Senate seat that will open up if Clinton is confirmed as secretary of state.

Winter storm blankets West with snow, heading east

RENO, Nev. (AP)—As much of the country awoke to a welcome reprieve from heavy snowfall and ice-slickened roads, a new

winter storm in the West snarled holiday traffic and darkened lights on Christmas trees in thousands of homes Thursday. In the Sierra Nevada, heavy snow and whiteout conditions led police to shut down an 80-mile stretch of Interstate 80 for several hours on Christmas between the California-Nevada line and Applegate, Calif. The state Highway Patrol cautioned drivers to be prepared for slow going. About 10,000 Salt Lake City-area residents were left without electricity to light Christmas trees Thursday morning after nearly a foot of snow fell in the midst of frigid temperatures. Utilities managed to restore power within the hour.

Asia

4 years later, tsunami victim rebuilds his life

PETTIYADICHCHENI, Sri Lanka (AP)—Every morning and evening, Velmurugu Kangasuriyam gathers his 2 1/2 year-old daughter and his wife and confronts the wreckage of his former life.

His wife, Thaya, lights an oil lamp on the mantle of a dark, bare concrete room. Kangasuriyam presses his hands together and closes his eyes. Little Theresa follows in imitation. For a long minute his new



family stands in silent prayer. Thaya places orange flowers in front of pictures of Hindu gods. She lays several more before a picture of Kangasuriyam's parents. The last flowers sit in front of a photo of a woman in a striking red bridal sari: Devi, who was Kangasuriyam's wife for just 10 months before she died, along with his parents, three of his sisters and a brother, four years ago Friday.

Two unidentified western tourists spend a quiet moment on Patong Beach Phuket, Thailand, Friday, Dec. 26, 2008, on the fourth anniversary of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

Pakistan warns India it will respond to any attack

MULTAN, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan warned India on Thursday not to launch a strike against it and vowed to respond to any attack—a sign that the relationship between the two nuclear powers remains strained in the wake of the Mumbai attacks. Though the South Asian rivals have engaged in tit-for-tat

accusations in recent weeks, both sides have repeatedly said they hope to avoid conflict. But India has not ruled out the use of force in response to the attacks, which it blames on a Pakistan-based militant group. “We want peace, but should not be complacent about India,” Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah

Mahmood Qureshi told reporters in his hometown of Multan in central Pakistan. “We should hope for the best but prepare for the worst.” Pakistan and India have fought three wars since they were created in the bloody partition of the Indian subcontinent at independence from Britain in 1947.

ASIAN BRIEFS

3 Chinese navy ships leave for Somalia

GUANGZHOU, China (AP)—Chinese navy ships usually stick close to home guarding their own coasts. But on Friday, warships armed with special forces, missiles and helicopters will sail for anti-piracy duty off Somalia—the first time the communist nation has sent ships on a mission that could involve fighting so far beyond its territorial waters. The three vessels—two destroyers and a supply ship—may increase worries about growing Chinese military power. The mission will also challenge China's ability to cooperate with other naval forces

patrolling the Gulf of Aden, one of the world's busiest sea lanes. Warships from India, Russia, NATO and the U.S. are also cruising the Somali waters that have been plagued by pirate attacks in recent months.

2 Chinese go on trial for selling melamine

BEIJING (AP)—Two Chinese went on trial Friday accused of making and selling the chemical at the center of a tainted milk scandal blamed for killing six children and sickening nearly 300,000 others. Police say Zhang Yujun and Zhang Yanzhang illegally manufactured and sold a “protein powder” composed

mainly of melamine and malt dextrin, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. The powder was added to raw milk to make it appear high in protein content. An official at the publicity office of Hebei supreme court confirmed that the trial started Friday at the Shijiazhuang Intermediate People's Court. He refused to give his name or other details. State television showed both men in court in handcuffs with their heads bowed while being questioned by three judges. Sanlu Group Co., the main company in the scandal, is based in Shijiazhuang. The company confirmed earlier this week that it was bankrupt.

World

Troops in Iraq find Christmas in memories

BAGHDAD (AP)—Army Sgt. Robin Cameron stood guard outside a once opulent Iraqi shopping mall that now serves as a small U.S. military outpost, trying not to think about what he was missing with his family on Christmas. “It's just another day in Iraq,” he said, waving through a convoy of armored vehicles heading out to patrol Baghdad's Mansour neighborhood, once home to Saddam Hussein's favored officers and later an insurgent stronghold known for its deadly attacks on American troops. Although troop levels are expected to start declining after provincial elections on Jan. 31, the same number are in Iraq today—about 146,000—as in May 2003, when President

George W. Bush declared the end of major hostilities two months after the invasion. As of Christmas Day, at least 4,218 members of the U.S. military had died in the Iraq war, according to an Associated Press count. The latest was a soldier was killed in a rocket or mortar attack Thursday near Mosul in northern Iraq, the military said in a statement.

Israel moves closer to Gaza invasion

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel moved closer to invading Gaza, saying Thursday it had wrapped up preparations for a broad offensive after Palestinian militants fired about 100 rockets and mortar shells across the border in two days. Israel's foreign minister brushed off a call for restraint

from Egypt's president, and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert made a direct appeal to Gaza's people to pressure their leaders to stop the barrages. But the attacks showed no signs of ending. By nightfall, three rockets and 15 mortar shells had exploded in Israel. Olmert issued his appeal

WORLD BRIEFS

Guinea coup leader solidifies his hold over nation


CONAKRY, Guinea (AP)—Guinea's coup leader solidified his hold over this impoverished West African nation Thursday as the prime minister who served under its late dictator surrendered and stepped down along with dozens of other government leaders. While some welcomed new military leader Capt. Moussa Camara as a break with the past, others worried he will try to cling to power like the strongman whose death this week touched off the political crisis. Camara had ordered Prime Minister Ahmed Tidiane Souare and other leaders of Guinea's government and armed forces to come out of hid-

ing and turn themselves in at a military barracks within 24 hours. If they did not, he threatened to organize a nationwide search for them. Souare's mother, Aissatou, told The Associated Press in a telephone interview that her son was no longer prime minister and that he and the other ministers went to the barracks to avoid being hunted down.


Pope appeals for solidarity in tough economy


VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Benedict XVI urged a world confronting a financial crisis, conflict, and increasing poverty not to lose hope at Christmas, but to join in “authentic solidarity” to prevent global ruin. His message of salva-

tion amid growing concern about the economic meltdown facing rich and poor nations alike was echoed across the continent in London, where Britain's Queen Elizabeth II called for courage in response to the rough times. Speaking from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica to tens of thousands of pilgrims, tourists and Romans in the square below, the pope called his Christmas message known as “Urbi et Orbi”—Latin for “to the City and to the World”—a “proclamation of hope.” And he stressed that it was “meant for all men and women.” As the global economy continues to spiral downward, Benedict said, “an increasingly uncertain future is regarded with apprehension, even in affluent nations.”



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.govmp • Website: http://www.nmhc.govmp





**NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST**

BLAS T. MAGOFNA ("Trustor"), on or about January 12, 1995, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on January 20, 1995, under Document No. 95-143 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 002 B 12, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 737 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS SHOWN ON THE DIVISION OF LANDS AND SURVEY'S OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 5014/94, DATED FEBRUARY 7, 1994, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 94-396, DATED FEBRUARY 10, 1994, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on September 12, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on **January 15, 2009**, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **\$49,330.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairperson of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **January 14, 2009, at 4:00 p.m.** **All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than January 14, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The further right is reserved, in the absence of satisfactory bids for the outright sale of the said parcel of real property to a qualified buyer, to offer such property at the same time and place, or at a later time, for long-term lease to any person on the usual terms and conditions for long term leases of real property offered by the Trustee to the highest bidder for such lease. The minimum bid amount of **\$49,330.00** shall also apply with lump sum payment for the term of the lease.

The lease shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The lease price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.


Dated this 10th day of December 2008.

By:


/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

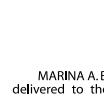
Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director, at 234-6866/9447 for more information.

*****NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency*****



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.govmp • Website: http://www.nmhc.govmp





**NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST**

MARINA A. BAUTISTA and LORETO L. BAUTISTA (collectively "Trustor"), on or about November 15, 1999, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on November 15, 1999, under Document No. 99-2777 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 011 G 972, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 781 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS SHOWN ON THE DIVISION OF LANDS AND SURVEY'S OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 011 G 18, DATED DECEMBER 3, 1993, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 93-4286, DATED DECEMBER 9, 1993, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on September 12, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on **January 15, 2009**, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **\$50,730.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairperson of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **January 14, 2009, at 4:00 p.m.** **All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than January 14, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The further right is reserved, in the absence of satisfactory bids for the outright sale of the said parcel of real property to a qualified buyer, to offer such property at the same time and place, or at a later time, for long-term lease to any person on the usual terms and conditions for long term leases of real property offered by the Trustee to the highest bidder for such lease. The minimum bid amount of **\$50,730.00** shall also apply with lump sum payment for the term of the lease.

The lease shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The lease price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.


Dated this 10th day of December 2008.

By:


/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director


Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director, at 234-6866/9447 for more information.

*****NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency*****



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.govmp • Website: http://www.nmhc.govmp





**NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST**

CARMENT T. ANDON and SAMUEL M. ANDON (collectively "Trustor"), on or about October 22, 2004, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on November 2, 2004, under Document No. 04-2544 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 011 G 308, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 797 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS SHOWN ON THE DIVISION OF LANDS AND SURVEY'S OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 011 G 06, DATED DECEMBER 9, 1993, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 93-4414, DATED DECEMBER 16, 1993, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its 2nd Notice of Default and served to Trustor on September 12, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on **January 15, 2009**, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **\$43,730.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairperson of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **January 14, 2009, at 4:00 p.m.** **All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than January 14, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The further right is reserved, in the absence of satisfactory bids for the outright sale of the said parcel of real property to a qualified buyer, to offer such property at the same time and place, or at a later time, for long-term lease to any person on the usual terms and conditions for long term leases of real property offered by the Trustee to the highest bidder for such lease. The minimum bid amount of **\$43,730.00** shall also apply with lump sum payment for the term of the lease.

The lease shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The lease price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Dated this 10th day of December 2008.

By:

/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director, at 234-6866/9447 for more information.

*****NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency*****

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, December 27, 2008

\$16B expected from 1.5M OFWs by yearend

RELATED NEWS

Remittances seen growing 13 pct. to \$16.9B. **PAGE 14**

MANILA, Philippines—Some 1.5 million overseas Filipino workers will have been deployed and their remittances to have reached \$16 billion to \$17 billion by the end of 2008, Labor Secretary Marianito Roque said in his yearend report.

In contrast, new local jobs comprised only about 60 percent of overseas jobs.

Citing the report of the National Statistics Office's Labor Force Survey, Roque said the number of employed persons in the local front grew by 861,000 to reach 34.533 million in October 2008.

He also said Public Employment Service Offices (PESOs), the nationally supervised network by the labor department, managed to provide jobs to some 517,667 seekers, achieving a placement rate of 71 percent.

The Philippine Overseas Em-

ployment Administration said a total of 1,221,829 OFWs were deployed worldwide from January 1 to November 30.

It said the successful deployment of more than a million OFWs during the year was complemented by the new markets that opened up in Canada, Romania, Bulgaria, Dubai, Taiwan, Qatar, and Australia.

Roque noted that from January to October 2008, professionals and skilled workers accounted for 90 percent of the total new hired OFWs.

Citing the report from the Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLOs), Roque said Filipino workers were preferred in more than 30 host destinations.

Even with the global crisis, Roque said, "South Australia is bent on recruiting OFWs to address its perennial skills shortage." (*INQUIRER.net*)



SANTA SUIT

A diver clad in Santa Claus suit feeds moray eels inside an aquarium Thursday, Dec. 25, 2008 at Manila's Ocean Park as he entertains Christmas Day crowds.

LABOR FRONT

Sponsors of temporary visitors

By **FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: Are sponsors of temporary alien visitors require to be staying in the CNMI?

A: All persons seeking to sponsor aliens whether as temporary visitors or for a longer term must maintain residence within the CNMI.

However, this requirement does not apply to a sponsor who is out of the Commonwealth on orders from any branch of the military service of the U.S. or a National Guard of any State, or Reserve Unit, but who entered the service from the CNMI and who intends to return to the Commonwealth upon completion of the tour of duty, according to the CNMI Immigration Rules and Regulations. The Regulations state that sponsors living outside the CNMI do not qualify.

■ ■ ■

Q: Are businesses that are barred from hiring alien workers permitted to sponsor aliens?

A: The Regulations state that the Division of Immigration may refuse to allow a person or business to be a sponsor if that person or business has been barred from employing foreign national workers, provided however, an individual so barred may sponsor an immediate relative.

■ ■ ■

Q: Does sufficient income matter in allowing a person to sponsor an alien?

A: The Division of Immigration may refuse to allow a person to be a sponsor of an alien applying in an entry class other than as an immediate relative if the sponsor fails to demonstrate sufficient income to ensure that all expenses of the alien will be paid and the alien does not become a burden on the public services of the CNMI.

The Regulations require that to be eligible as a sponsor of an alien in these entry classes, the sponsor must demonstrate income over the immediately preceding four months at a rate that will provide a gross annual income of at least \$20,000 or the sponsor must demonstrate an average bank balance of \$3,000 for the immediately preceding three months. The Immigration director may also waive this income requirement in the interests of the CNMI.

Disclaimer: Readers should conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional legal advice. Saipan Tribune will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader's reliance on information obtained from this section. Submit questions on labor issues to Saipan Tribune via e-mail at editor@saipantribune.com, or by calling 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747 and leaving a message at Ext. 133 or 135. You may also submit questions in person by writing it down and dropping it off at the Saipan Tribune's office on the second floor of the CIC Centre on Beach Road, Garapan.

TO SURVIVE VISA WAIT FOR UAE RE-ENTRY

Filipinos resort to odd jobs on Kish Island, Iran

BY **JOJO DASS**
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

KISH ISLAND, IRAN—The cliché that there's no free lunch is actually a rule of thumb for hundreds of Filipinos stranded on this island, waiting for their visas to be issued by the United Arab Emirates government for employment purposes.

From doing laundry service to peddling prepared meals, Filipinos make a living to offset the cost of hotel room rent and food during their stay. The waiting period ranges from a month to three months depending on the visa application—tourist or employment—and on whether their papers were in order.

Foreigners arriving in the UAE on tourist visas are required to exit the country once their travel documents expire. Kish Island, which does not require visas, is among two places where the expats go for their "visa runs" as it is called, the other being Buraime, a border town in Oman.

Most Filipinos wanting to land jobs in the UAE enter the country on a tourist visa, which has a 30-day validity period that can be extended for another 30 days, during which they spend time job-hunting. Successful ones leave the country temporarily while their employment visas are being processed; those unable to secure jobs also leave and re-apply for another tourist visa to get another try.

While on Kish Island, the "visa runners" stay in mid-sized hotels that charge approximately US\$10 (35

dirhams, the UAE currency) a night; food costs approximately US\$3 (10 dirhams) a meal. There are a few cases where those waiting for their employment visas have their employers pay for their rooms.

To weather it out, those spending on their own and running low on funds have resorted to odd jobs—among them 32-year-old Cecille Ruiz, a 2004 graduate of Polytechnic State College in Cantulan, Surigao del Sur who holds a degree in industrial education.

Ruiz, a mother of two who came to Abu Dhabi on Aug. 20, 2008 on a two-month tourist visa, arrived on Kish Island on Oct. 18 with only US\$15 (50 dirhams) left for food and room—the rest of her money having been spent on immigration fees and a three-night room deposit.

Realizing she would have to stay for over a month, Ruiz said she asked her roommates if she could do their laundry for them in exchange for food.

"I was so desperate," she said. "In my prayers, I asked God how I could survive. I told Him, you sent me here, you must have a reason for doing so. That same evening, two new guests arrived. I overheard them wondering where to do their laundry. I came up to them and made the offer," Ruiz added.

She at first cried, noting she had never washed other people's dirty laundry before, not even back home in Bgy. Doyos Carrascal, Surigao del Sur, where her husband is a barangay counselor.

Ruiz, as of this writing, was still

waiting for her new tourist visa to be issued. Asked why she did not prefer to go back to the Philippines instead, she replied: "I actually would really want to go home. But I was thinking I'd be a loser if I do so. All my efforts and the money I had spent—we are now heavily burdened with debts acquired for my papers and travel to the UAE—would go to waste if I return home empty-handed.

"Besides, I'm doing this for my two kids. I want to give them a better life, provide them with a home of their own, send them to college. I don't want them to grow up the way we did where at times we had to share a small amount of food on the table."

Ruiz, whose laundry service is done underground as it is not allowed by the hotel's management, said she averages approximately US\$12 (40 dirhams) a day. She said her customers—all fellow Filipinos—pay her more than what they should to show support. "Now I can buy shampoo and bath soap. The only thing I have to be bothered with is my tourist visa. I definitely am going back to Abu Dhabi and look for a job."

Jonathan E. Gaetos, a former Philippine Army sergeant who holds a degree in business administration from the Philippine School of Business Administration in Quezon City, sells and delivers lunch to fellow Filipinos staying at the hotels. The prepared meals cost approximately US\$2.50 (10 dirhams). In return, he gets about US\$.75 cents (2 dirhams) for each lunch sold, and free food

for the day. Gaetos said he averages US\$6 (20 dirhams) a day.

Gaetos, who went to Dubai on Sept. 16, 2008 also on a tourist visa, arrived on Kish Island on Nov. 13 following his visa's expiration. He said he got part-time jobs waiting tables at hotels.

At the time of the interview, Gaetos was already on his 35th day of stay on Kish.

He said he got the food delivery job after having a talk with a fellow Filipino working as a cook at another hotel. "I asked him for help, told him my situation. He said, 'Here's what we can do: We'll give you lunch packs that you could sell around, and give you free food.' That was good enough for me," Gaetos said. "I was desperate. I needed to survive."

Asked how it feels to be doing such an odd job considering his educational background, Gaetos said, "That's okay with me. It's the only way to survive. I have no choice. If I would not do something, I'd die."

Liban "Wendel" Danlico, also a former Philippine Army soldier who was with 30th Infantry Battalion based in Zamboanga, arrived in Dubai on May 8, 2008, with a tourist visa. While there, he got jobs as a security watchman, a carpenter and a cleaner. He arrived on Kish Island on Nov. 20, 2008.

Danlico said he took his chances asking for a job at a fastfood center near the hotel where he was staying at, and got one as a kitchen helper; he said his employer had also informed him about the possibility of being transferred to the company's main branch in Tehran.

RP mulls lifting OFW ban in Lebanon

By **KRISTINE L. ALAVE**
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine government is conducting a study on the political and security situation in Lebanon to determine whether to lift a ban on the deployment of workers to that country imposed in 2006.

Labor Secretary Mariano Roque disclosed this recently, saying Philippine Ambassador Roy Cimatu has been tasked to assess the security situation in Lebanon.

“We are doing a survey again because the last report in October was essentially the same. General Cimatu has been ordered by the President to submit his report on Lebanon this January,” Roque said.

The Department of Labor and Employment would complete the study before deciding on Beirut’s request to lift the ban, Roque added.

The Philippine government imposed the ban in 2006, at the

height of the Israel-Lebanon war. The government also repatriated thousands of workers from the Lebanon.

Despite the deployment ban, thousands of Filipinos managed to sneak in the country, a Lebanese official said.

In 2006, around 5,200 Filipinos went to Lebanon. In 2007, another 16,140 sneaked out of the Philippines, some taking a circuitous route to get to Lebanon. Between January and November 2008, 21,982 overseas Filipino workers entered Lebanon, data from the Lebanese embassy said.

Most of the Filipino workers in Lebanon are employed as domestic workers but recent reports indicate that they have taken better paying jobs in restaurants.

Meanwhile, Roque said it was unlikely for the Philippines to lift the OFW deployment ban in Iraq or permit the entry of Filipino workers in the relatively peaceful northern region of the war-torn country.

Recently, Iraqi embassy officials in Manila asked the Philippine government to allow OFWs in Iraq in anticipation of the huge worker requirement in 2009 for major infrastructure and reconstruction projects.

Iraqi officials said the Philippines could send workers to the Kurdish region in the north, which has been relatively peaceful compared with the rest of the country. They noted that many foreign firms have set up headquarters in the region.

But Roque said it would be difficult to agree to Iraq’s request due to safety considerations.

“Even if it is peaceful in the north, nobody, nothing would prevent them (OFWs) from going South. When they are in the South, they might be taken hostage,” Roque said.

The Philippines imposed the deployment ban in Iraq in 2004 after a Filipino truck driver was abducted by an Iraqi extremist group. He was released through the intercession of the Philippines’ diplomatic contacts in

the Middle East. The Philippine government also pulled out its military contingent to Iraq not

long after the driver’s release. This strained its relations with the United States, which under-

took the invasion of Iraq, with help from countries composing a “coalition of the willing.”



CHRISTMAS DAY
Vendors selling inflatable toys and kites take advantage of the big number of people in the park on Christmas Day, Thursday, Dec. 25, 2008 in Manila. Christmas is usually celebrated with family reunions and outings.

Two hurt in videoke bar blast

By **EDWIN FERNANDEZ**
MINDANAO BUREAU

TACURONG CITY—Two civilians were wounded when two men tossed a hand grenade at a videoke house here, the military and police said.

Colonel Marlo Salazar, 601st brigade chief, said the 7:30 p.m explosion left a woman and a teenager wounded.

Senior Superintendent Benur Mongao, Sultan Kudarat police director, identified the wounded as Joebert Gomez, 16 of Lake Sebu, South Co-

tabato and Juanita Medel, a resident of Barangay Tina, Tacurong City.

Both are being treated for minor injuries at the Tamon-dong Hospital.

Mongao said police investigators were looking at several angles, including a “love triangle,” and extortion.

Salazar said police and Army probers have pointed to a group of civilians whom witnesses said they saw running away shortly before the blast.

Police have been alerted for possible attacks by suspected

terrorist groups and rogue Moro rebels.

Salazar appealed to New Year revelers not to set off firecrackers or fire their guns to prevent similar attacks.

Local officials in North Cotabato blamed Moro rebels for mortar attacks in Alameda and Pigcawayan that left a woman dead and eight others wounded on Christmas Eve.

The attacks came as people were exploding firecrackers.

“We could hardly determine the blasts, whether it came from bomb explosions or powerful firecrackers,” Salazar said.

Ex-security guards behind Cotabato blast

By **ABIGAIL KWOK**
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Police are now looking for two terminated security guards as the suspects behind the explosions that rocked a Cotabato City bus terminal on Christmas day, a police official said on Friday.

The explosions that occurred inside the Husky Bus Terminal at Barangay (village) Tamontaka at around 8:15 p.m. Thursday partially damaged six buses, two of

which were air-conditioned, said Senior Superintendent Willie Dangane, Cotabato City police chief.


The duty security guard at that time, whom Dangane identified as Mansor Balindon, saw the two suspects who threw the grenades and fled towards the direction of Datu Odin Sinsuat in Shariff Kabunsuan.

Damage to the six buses included shattered windshields and side mirrors, as well as body punctures caused by shrapnel of the two fragmenta-


tion hand grenades hurled by the two suspects on board a black Kawasaki motorcycle.


Dangane said that prior to the incident, some security guards were terminated this month by the bus company operated by a certain Emilio Escobello Jr.

The grenade attacks came while employees of the Gen. Santos City-based bus firm were having their Christmas party. *(With reports from Jeoffry Maitem and Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao)*



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp





**NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST**

BRADLEY JOHN TOVES ATALIG aka LARRY JOHN TOVES ATALIG and NANETTE E. ATALIG (collectively "Trustor"), on or about September 20, 2001, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on October 2, 2001, under Document No. 01-2166 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 347 R 96, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 827 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS SHOWN ON THE DIVISION OF LANDS AND SURVEY'S OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 347 R 07, DATED DECEMBER 9, 1993, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 93-4282, DATED DECEMBER 9, 1993, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on September 12, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on **January 15, 2009**, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **\$26,230.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairperson of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **January 14, 2009, at 4:00 p.m.** **All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than January 14, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The further right is reserved, in the absence of satisfactory bids for the outright sale of the said parcel of real property to a qualified buyer, to offer such property at the same time and place, or at a later time, for long-term lease to any person on the usual terms and conditions for long term leases of real property offered by the Trustee to the highest bidder for such lease. The minimum bid amount of **\$26,230.00** shall also apply with lump sum payment for the term of the lease.


The lease shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The lease price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Dated this 10th day of December 2008.


By: _____/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director


Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director, at 234-6866/9447 for more information.

*****NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency*****



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp





**NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST**

CELINA M. SETEFANO and YILIAMI S. SETEFANO (collectively "Trustor"), on or about August 2, 1983, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on August 3, 1983, under Document No. 17659 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 002 F 67, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 1,230 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED ON DRAWING/CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 002 F 00, THE ORIGINAL OF WHICH WAS REGISTERED WITH THE LAND REGISTRY AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 691, ON THE 1ST DAY OF MARCH, 1971.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on September 12, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on **January 15, 2009**, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **\$43,730.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairperson of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **January 14, 2009, at 4:00 p.m.** **All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than January 14, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The further right is reserved, in the absence of satisfactory bids for the outright sale of the said parcel of real property to a qualified buyer, to offer such property at the same time and place, or at a later time, for long-term lease to any person on the usual terms and conditions for long term leases of real property offered by the Trustee to the highest bidder for such lease. The minimum bid amount of **\$43,730.00** shall also apply with lump sum payment for the term of the lease.


The lease shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The lease price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Dated this 10th day of December 2008.


By: _____/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director


Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director, at 234-6866/9447 for more information.

*****NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency*****



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp





**NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST**

JUAN F. BARCINAS and BARBARA D.L.C. EVANGELISTA (collectively "Trustor"), on or about June 14, 1983, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on June 16, 1983, under Document No. 17490 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT 001 T 52, AS SHOWN ON THE DIVISION OF LANDS AND SURVEY'S OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 001 T 00, DATED AUGUST 14, 1969, AND CONTAINING AN AREA OF 1,486 SQUARE METERS.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on September 12, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on **January 15, 2009**, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **\$82,930.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairperson of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **January 14, 2009, at 4:00 p.m.** **All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than January 14, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The further right is reserved, in the absence of satisfactory bids for the outright sale of the said parcel of real property to a qualified buyer, to offer such property at the same time and place, or at a later time, for long-term lease to any person on the usual terms and conditions for long term leases of real property offered by the Trustee to the highest bidder for such lease. The minimum bid amount of **\$82,930.00** shall also apply with lump sum payment for the term of the lease.

The lease shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The lease price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Dated this 10th day of December 2008.

By: _____/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director, at 234-6866/9447 for more information.

*****NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency*****

Remittances seen growing 13 pct. to \$16.9B

By DORIS DUMLAO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippine banking system will likely capture \$16.3 billion in overseas Filipino remittances this year, up 13 percent from a year ago, despite the major global economic downturn, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas estimated.

Including money sent home through non-banking channels, remittances this year will likely total \$16.9 billion or about 10 percent of domestic economic output, BSP officials said in a press briefing.

Largely owing to these remittances, the BSP has projected that the country could end the year with a modest balance-of-payments surplus of \$500 mil-

lion, much smaller than the record-high \$8.5 billion in 2007.

Large foreign capital outflows triggered by the US-centered global financial crisis trimmed the country's BOP surplus this year, but overseas remittances as well as receipts from business process outsourcing supported a sustained surplus, Bango Sentral Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the local economy and the rest of the world. Any transaction that gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident like importation or debt servicing is a deficit item in the BOP while any that gives rise to a receipt like borrowing, exporting or overseas Filipino remittance is a surplus item.

The current account, a measure of the underlying foreign exchange income of the economy, is expected to yield a surplus of \$2.2 billion this year, BSP director Iluminada Sicat said. In the first nine months, the BOP position was supported by a \$1.2-billion surplus in the current account.

She added that gross international reserves were likely to settle at \$36 billion by year's end, equivalent to 5.5 months' worth of imports.

For 2009, Guinigundo said the country would still likely run a surplus, contrary to expectations of the International Monetary Fund.

He said inflows from overseas Filipino workers would remain strong, although not as robust as the levels seen in previous years given the uncertain global environment.

From a stop-gap measure initiated by the government to curb unemployment in the 1970s, overseas employment has developed into a vital indus-

try generating foreign exchange exceeding foreign investment inflows for the Philippines. Overseas Filipino remittances flowing to the country through the banking system have exceeded the \$1-billion-a-month

mark since May 2006.

Risk aversion among offshore investors could pull down the BOP surplus, Guinigundo said, but he said the capital outflows would not likely be as worse as what was seen this year.

The BOP yielded a surplus of \$1.5 billion for the first nine months despite a deficit of \$394 million in the third quarter.

8 killed, 9 hurt in series of rebel attacks

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—At least eight civilians were killed and nine others were wounded in a series of attacks by Muslim separatist rebels in the southern Mindanao region this week, a military spokesman said Thursday.

Army spokesman Lt. Col. Julieto Ando said four civilians were killed and one was wounded when rebels attacked a village in Ninoy Aquino township in Sultan Kudarat province on Tuesday. The guerrillas killed three more people in another attack on the same hamlet the following day.

"This is an atrocity against innocent civilians," he said.

Ando said the rebels also fired mortar rounds at a military detachment in a mountain village in Alamada township in Cotabato province Wednesday, killing one civilian and wounding eight others.

He said troops on Thursday defused a homemade bomb packed with nails on a bridge used by commuters and soldiers in nearby Maguindanao province.

Eid Kabalu, spokesman for the 11,000-strong Moro Islamic Liberation Front, denied the guerrillas attacked civilians and dismissed Ando's report as "military propaganda."

"If anyone had been killed, the (rebel front) had nothing to do with it," he said.

He also said the bridge where the alleged bomb had been discovered was in a "military controlled community," suggesting it was unlikely the rebels could have planted a bomb in the area.

The government suspended talks with the rebels in August after three guerrilla commanders went on a bloody rampage, killing dozens in predominantly Christian communities.

The rebels said their men were frustrated after the Supreme Court scrapped a preliminary autonomy deal for minority Muslims, ruling it was unconstitutional.

The Philippine government has reconstituted its peace panel and said it wants to resume talks with the rebels who have fighting for Muslim self-rule.



FINAL TRADING DAY

A trader rings the bell as another one blows a paper horn to signal the closing of the last trading day of the year Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2008 at the Philippine Stock exchange in Manila's financial district of Makati. Share prices closed 0.6 percent higher with a composite index rose to 10.66 points to 1,872.85 while all-shares index rose to 0.6 percent to 1,196.99 points.

AP

PERSONAL FINANCE

Top personal finance lessons for '08

By MA. SALVE DUPLITO
INQUIRER.NET

2008, the year that bathed Wall Street with doubt and fear and caused financial systems across the globe to stop dead in their tracks, is about to come to an end.

It was a year of chaos and confusion.

It was a year when people wondered whether some of what they have long-assumed about financial markets were way off the mark after all.

Remember Alan Greenspan?

It was a year when that age-old phrase "the first shall be the last, and the last shall be the first" seemed strangely apt.

Isn't it true that in this crisis, the rich and the greedy are feeling the bigger brunt of the financial meltdown? Yet the ones who are at the bottom rungs of society will still feel the pinch from the crisis moving forward, even if they had nothing to do with it.

So, what are the top personal finance lessons that can be learned this year?

Ethel Bondoc, owner of Storytellers Inc., a company that cranks out creative videos for corporate clients, weddings and other events, tied

the knot this year and became Ethel Bondoc-Nolasco.

Her personal financial planning, sans the crisis, would have been fairly straightforward with broad strokes she has learned from personal research and observation.

But the events of 2008 are making her extra watchful and careful about how to save for her first child, her first home and her first forays into investment and retirement planning, among others.

"I am more conscious about savings because it is really scary now. On one hand, we are thinking that the crisis might be more advantageous for us because corporations will be budget-conscious and will think about more affordable alternatives, which we offer. But we might also lose clients because of the crisis, so we are thinking about whether to expand or not," she says.

Despite the shaky financial picture, the top personal finance lessons for 2008 are back-to-basics principles that even the worst crisis since the Great Depression hasn't changed.

1. Crisis-proof your finances.

A lot of us put everything we

have into a hot tip, a popular investment, a moneymaking scheme, especially if we think it is an insider's scoop. We like the idea of striking it rich in one fell swoop and so we withdraw all our money from the bank and even borrow from relatives. The tenets of financial planning say this is a slippery slope to penury and regret. Remember never to bet the house and never to bet everything on one investment. Divide the money you don't need immediately and put them in different investments. Invest only what you can afford to lose.

Joelle Ona-Horca, a 35-year-old credit analyst at a foreign bank, says she realized she was too reliant on American International Group/Philamlife for her family's nonlife insurance plans. She says she is now diversifying.

"Diversify assets, not just the nature of the assets like money markets, stocks or bonds, but also the underlying issuer," she says.

2. Plan for the long term, but revisit your goals regularly.

People make more mistakes when they panic in a down market. Losing everything can

drive anyone nuts, so we make the worst decisions especially when we are emotional. A long-term perspective allows us to sit back and watch the market first before jumping into the fray.

However, a biannual or annual revisiting of goals should also recalibrate our financial plans.

Joelle adds that bargains can be found not just in the malls and tiangge sales this season but also in the financial sector. "I'm letting the law of cost-averaging work in my favor by setting aside a set amount of money each month to invest—the bulk of which goes to a PSE index Fund," Joelle says.

3. Before you invest, make sure you have an emergency fund.

Warren Matutino, a 32-year-old government employee who lives in Iloilo City, says for him, having three to six months of untouchable funds is the first step in constructing any serious financial plan. "Without this financial cushion, any unexpected expense can derail your long-term plans," he says.

Mutual funds' net asset value per share has this year dropped more than 40 percent at one point. Having to withdraw at that kind of loss because of an emergency can take a lot of the wind out of investment sails.

4. Don't be too greedy.

When we're talking about money for our children's education or for healthcare in our old age, for example, prudence is key. Never chase after returns and put money in an investment that is too good to be true. Know what you're getting into. If you don't understand something, ask for plain English explanation and if that doesn't work, just walk away from any investments being offered.

The recent \$50-billion Ponzi scam on Wall Street perpetrated by former Nasdaq chair Bernard Madoff fooled people in banks like Banco Santander and HSBC, as well as charities. Be prudent and ask yourself first if you are falling for a scam or not.

5. Live within your means.

Joelle says her mantra during these turbulent times is "distinguish between a need and a want." "Establishing a buying habit based on needs versus wants requires us to be brutally honest with ourselves. We must constantly evaluate what we see, hear and even what we think. Do we really need the latest iPhone? The 50-inch flatscreen?" she shares.

She adds that learning to say "no" is hard to do especially when we are bombarded left

and right by clever marketing campaigns. But she warns that people need to prepare for a financial drought. (Joelle, in fact, blogs about the best deals that can be found in the metropolis. Check it out here: <http://www.phbestdeals.com/>).

"This is still a work in progress, but I'm trying to curb my inclination to be an impulse buyer. I have become an obsessive list maker with a notebook in my bag listing all necessary purchases to keep me on track. I'm teaching my (5-year-old) kid to distinguish between a need and a want. He no longer goes on a "pointing spree" when in a toy store and is learning to read price labels to know if his wants fit the prescribed budget," he says.

6. Money is not everything.

Family, community, health, emotional and spiritual well-being are more important than lucre. While money is an important tool in keeping our families happy, we end up slaves to it when it becomes the main reason for most of the things that we do.

For more personal finance articles, visit [Inquirer.net's Money Smarts blog](http://Inquirer.net/money-smarts) at <http://blogs.inquirer.net/money-smarts>.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

‘Quality’ year for 2008 Metro Manila Filmfest

‘Iskul,’ ‘Tanging Ina,’ ‘Shake’ rule box office

By **BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.**
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—It's official.

Industry leaders noted that this year's entries to the Metro Manila Film Festival are of a "higher quality."

"For the first time, all eight entries were submitted for grading with the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB) and all eight merited positive grades," said Christine Dayrit, CEB chair. "This year, there are three grade-A movies and five B's. It has upped the ante for future festivals."

The three A's are the animated feature "Dayo," the historical romance "Baler" and the

drama "Magkaibigan." The first batch of B-graded films are the comedy flicks "Iskul Bukol: 20 Years After," "One Night Only" and "Ang Tanging Ina N'yong Lahat."

The last two that received a B grade are Regal franchise movies: the adult comedy "Desperadas 2" and the horror trilogy "Shake, Rattle & Roll X."

This year, even commercial fare like "Iskul Bukol" merited a B grade—unlike in previous years when the "Enteng Kabisote" movies weren't even submitted for grading.

Said Rolando S. Atienza, chair of the Film Development Council of the Philippines: "This is an unprecedented achievement and underscores

the substantial growth of the local film industry."

Atienza said he hopes the films' good showing at the CEB will translate into commercial success.

"The industry is alive and kicking," he said. "With the improvement in the quality of films, I expect box-office returns to improve as well."

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair Bayani Fernando agreed: "I think this year's festival will make money. These movies are not only commercial, they are also entertaining and of good quality."

The MMDA spearheads the annual film fest.

Ric Camaligan, member of

the MMFF executive committee, told the Inquirer that on the first day of the film fest on Christmas Day, "the initial trend ranked the following entries in this order at the tills: "Iskul Bukol," "Tanging Ina," "Shake," "Desperadas," "Baler," "One Night," "Dayo" and "Magkaibigan."

Movie actors Jericho Rosales left and Philip Salvador right and actress Anne Curtis, wearing costumes as they react to the crowd on top their float during the parade of stars for the Metro Manila Film Festival Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2008 in Manila.

AP



RUSHES

© Philippine Daily Inquirer, INQUIRER.net

Eugene Domingo does not regret turning down the role that singer-comedian Ogie Alcasid now plays in "Desperadas 2."

"Let's just say ... Regal Films and I didn't agree on the business aspect," the award-winning comedian told the Philippine Daily Inquirer over lunch last week.

"I'm ready to apologize for the inconvenience I might have caused the production team," Eugene said.

The luncheon conference was for Eugene's newest show, "Everybody Hapi," on TV5. It airs Sundays at 6 p.m. "This program is being shown at a time when there's no sitcom airing on other networks," she said. "A sitcom is part of every Pinoy household. Everybody needs a good laugh."

Eugene also hosts "Ha-Ha-Hayop," which airs 5 p.m. Mondays on TV5. For GMA 7, she is joining the cast of the upcoming Dingdong Dantes-Marian Rivera starrer, "Ang Babaeng Hinugot sa Aking Tadyang."

"I'm proud that I've established myself as an independent artist," said Eugene. "An exclusive network contract limits one's capability as an actor."

She is also in the cast of "Ang Tanging Ina N'yong Lahat," Star Cinema's official entry to the 2008 Metro Manila Film Festival.

Where it's going

Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, winner of the reality show "Celebrity Duets: Season 2," has donated part of his cash prize to Child Haus, a facility for kids afflicted with cancer.

Fernando, who won P1 million, recently handed a P300,000 check to Dr. Rachel

de Rosario, Child Haus executive director. He said another portion of his winnings will go to Caritas Manila.

Fatherhood helps

Jao Mapa says fatherhood helped him become a better actor.

Jao, part of the popular young actors' group "Gwapings" in the 90s, is now the father of three—Ben, 6, Caleb, 3 and Stacey, 2. His wife Cecil is also an actress.

"I'm more mature now, more responsible, a family man," Jao, 32, told Inquirer Entertainment during a media gathering last week.

He is in the cast of "Baler," Viva Films' entry to the 2008 Metro Manila Film Festival.

He was initially intimidated by his co-stars (Jericho Rosales, Philip Salvador, among others) he said. "Kinailangan ko'ng magpakitang gilás." Once he got over that, he added, "It was pretty much like going to a party every day."

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend's gabfests on TV. (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

■ Katrina Halili, asked if Vicki Belo has spoken to her about an alleged romance with Hayden Kho: "Nakapag-usap kami ni Dr. Belo. Okay naman po kaming dalawa." (And she proceeded to promote her latest movie.)

■ Rufa Mae Quinto, on her being one of the alleged causes of the same breakup: "Ha? Ano naman kaya ang kinalaman ko doon?" (She also has a new movie.)

■ Dingdong Dantes, on rumors Marian Rivera is pregnant: "Sinagot na nya 'yon. I don't want to get into that anymore ... I really don't want to get in the middle of everything. Siyempre sa akin lang, I'm always for the truth. The truth will set you

free." (Huh?)

■ Marian Rivera, on breaking down during a recent press con after being asked about pregnancy rumors: "Tama na 'yon. Nasabi ko na. At saka pina-paubaya ko na lang sa Diyos yon. Basta ako nasabi ko na ang lahat. Okay na ako doon. Tama na yun." (She is in the same movie as Rufa Mae.)

■ Marian on a reporter's direct verbal attack that she is "plastikada": "Hindi naman lahat ng tao ma-pi-please mo talaga. So pinapahalagahan ko ang mga taong nagmamahal sa akin at saka mahirap ipaliwanag ang nararamdaman mo. Sobrang damping kontrata yung iniingatan ko kaya nung lumabas yung issue na yon, nasaktan ako." (Huh? Dahil sa kontrata?)

■ Marian, asked how Dingdong is supporting her amidst the controversies: "Nag-sorry naman siya kasi talagang na-i-involve ako. At siya naman talaga ang dahilan." (Careful.)

■ JC de Vera, on getting closer to "La Lola" co-star Rhian Ramos: "Masarap kausap si Rhian kasi matalino siya. Lahat ng pag-uusapan niyo may sense. Lahat, every day nag-uusap kami, meron akong bagong natutunan sa kanya." (Good gauge.)

■ Jericho Rosales, asked who he would go back to, given the chance—Cindy Kurleto, Kristine Hermosa or Heart Evangelista? "I'd go back to my last." (Aww.)

■ Sen. Kiko Pangilinan, on rumors that his marriage with Sharon Cuneta is on the rocks: "Dapat siguro matuto na yung mga nagkakalat ng walang katotohanan na it's not working ... It's obviously politically motivated ... Patay na patay pa rin kami sa isa't isa." (Isa pang aww.)

(Startalk, The Buzz, Showbiz Central)



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp



NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Amendment of the Commonwealth's Consolidated Plan for Program Year 2005-2009

(This advertisement is paid for with CDBG funds provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.)

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the amendment of the Commonwealth's Consolidated Plan for Program Year 2005-2009. The amendment provides the inclusion of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) which will be made available to the Commonwealth by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Intended use of the NSP grant is described as follows:

Priority	Activity Type	Use of funds
NSP Purchase	The purchase and rehabilitation of homes and residential properties owned by banks/lending institutions that have been abandoned or foreclosed upon in the various villages of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, in order to sell such homes to eligible Low, Moderate, and Middle-Income homebuyers. [HERA §2301(c)(3)(B)]	At least 90% of NSP funds will be allocated to NSP Purchase and NSP Financing Activities
NSP Program and Administration Costs	Program and Administrative Costs	Up to 10% of NSP funds

Total NSP Allocation: \$364,162.00. All NSP funds shall be used to benefit individuals and families whose incomes do not exceed 120 percent of area median income. At least 25% of NSP funds will be used to purchase and rehabilitate homes that will be sold to eligible homebuyers whose incomes are at or below 50 percent of the area median income. The CNMI's income limits for NSP are published at <http://www.huduser.org/publications/commdevl/nsp.html> under Pacific Islands.

The NSP program also establishes the following affordability requirements:

NSP funds invested per Unit	Minimum length of the Affordability Period
Less than \$15,000	5 years
\$15,000- \$40,000	10 years
More than \$40,000	15 years

The Amended Plan is available for public review and inspection at NMHC's Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Tinian and Rota during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays. Written comments must be received by NMHC **no later than 4:30 p.m., January 10, 2009, at our designated NMHC branches.**

NMHC does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to or treatment or employment of individuals under its programs or activities. NMHC has been designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Section 504, the ADA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 504 regulations implemented by the EEOC and the Department of Justice. NMHC will make necessary arrangements for persons with disabilities. If you should require any additional information or need special accommodations, please contact Zenie P. Mafnas, Planner/Grant Writer at 234-6866.

/s/ Joshua T. Sasamoto
Corporate Director

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Betrayed

Former President Corazon Aquino's apology to the disgraced former President Joseph Estrada for the "mistake" of Edsa 2001 is a betrayal of the highest aspirations of the democracy she helped restore in 1986, and which she remains the famous icon of. It also betrays the elitist understanding of the former president of the dynamics of recent mass movements in Philippine politics.

What, exactly, did Aquino say? Speaking after Estrada's turn at Jose de Venecia's book launching last Monday, Aquino said: "I am one of those who plead guilty for the 2001 [People Power uprising]. Lahat naman tayo nagkakamali. Patawarin mo na lang ako. [We all make mistakes. Please forgive me.]"

This was not the first time Aquino expressed regret over her role in unseating Estrada. In October 2005, after publicly calling on President Arroyo to resign because of election fraud, she said she regretted joining the people power protest against Estrada. "I thought GMA would be a better alternative to Estrada."

Well, so did we and millions of other Filipinos. But Edsa II was never about Arroyo. She was the main beneficiary because she had been elected to the vice presidency in 1998; in other words, she was the constitutional successor. But it was never about her.

Edsa II was a direct political action triggered by evidence of grave presidential wrongdoing; it was conceivable that Estrada could have blustered his way through the crisis, even after the military leadership had withdrawn its support from him, but there is no second-guessing the reason why millions of Filipinos were again out in the streets. In other words, even if Estrada had learned to tough it out with political wiles it is now clear he did not have then, the crowds in the street would have still been doing the right thing: expressing outrage over presidential corruption and agitating for a change of power.

Last year's well-argued, solidly based Sandiganbayan decision finding him guilty of two of four counts of plunder is the best justification for Edsa II. That, in the eyes of many, Ms Arroyo and her husband are equally guilty of large-scale plunder is no reason to regret Edsa II. What it is, instead, is reason to regret the seeming difficulty of launching Edsa III.

So on three crucial points, Sen. Benigno Aquino's widow and democracy's icon got it completely wrong: Edsa II was about ridding the country's highest office of the cancer of corruption, not about handing Ms Arroyo the position she would have been likely to contest in 2004 anyway. It was about a morally outraged people taking action, with no guarantee that a presidency built on the image of tough-talking machismo would prove vulnerable to street protests. And, not least, the Filipino nation now has incontrovertible proof of Estrada's perfidy; that, in the end, is the true meaning of Estrada's plunder conviction.

What we really would have wanted to see was Estrada apologizing for the corruption he was found guilty of. That would have been the best Christmas gift for a weary nation.

© Philippine Daily Inquirer

Abundance

I remember talking to a group of young men and women some years ago and telling them about something I had written in college. It was an editorial for the school organ. We were activists then and one of the priests who ran the school had tolerantly explained away the disturbance we were causing as the ebullience, or excess, of youth, something that would disappear in time, enabling us to take a more sober view of things.

I protested the condescension saying the left-handed compliment was a fine way to dodge what we were saying, which was how to make education more "relevant," a favorite word of our time. The ebullience of youth be damned, it didn't explain what needed explaining.

Looking back, however, I have become more appreciative of that idea, even if I continue to rebel against the idea of looking at things soberly, or with the kind of sobriety that reduces people to passivity and mediocrity. It is true, youth is ebullient, youth is idealistic, youth is given to changing the world. Which is often lost as one grows up—in the physical sense. Age is cautious, age is pragmatic, age is given to glimpsing only limits. Having seen many friends and acquaintances who have come to believe completely soberly that it is better to serve oneself than serve the people, the opposite of what they once embraced as true and good, I can say that with firm conviction.

I exhorted my audience to revel in their ebullience and idealism and sense of heroic potency while they still had them. Like the physical aspects of youth themselves, they might not be there for very long. And they have a way of going when you are not looking. They do not go as a result of big or dramatic decisions, like choosing to accept a bribe in exchange for principle, they go as a result of a series of small concessions, like being too swamped by work or daily chore or the pressures of married life, or imagining oneself to be so, to want to bother about "other things."

I exhorted my audience to hold on to their dreams to the extent that they could. That was especially so for those who had embarked, or wished to embark,

on the less beaten path, or the road not taken, as Robert Frost put it. That included those who wanted to become poets and musicians, those who wanted to teach, those who wanted to become doctors in the barrios, those who wanted to become human rights lawyers, those who wanted to do something with their lives other than waste it trying to get filthy rich, or worse getting so.

That wasn't as easy as it sounded, though from the perspective of youth it seemed like the most natural thing in the world. Teaching in particular no longer brings with it the kind of social distinction it did in the past, which compensated for the poor compensation. Then, teachers were held in high esteem in the communities they taught and remembered fervently by those whose fragile minds they molded. They were accorded important seats in town functions and greeted respectfully in the streets. Today, teachers are held in derision in the communities they teach, being regarded either as failed OFW recruits or in-between overseas workers in hiatus. They are accorded only the concession to sell tocino or bra or whatever sells in elementary public schools to augment income.

The pressures to shift to more "sober" occupations or concerns are as subtle as they are legion. Christmas is especially full of those pitfalls, with its reunions which draw the largest gatherings of family or clan among the holidays. It's easy to scoff at those who spend their waking hours slaving away or concocting plots to get rich, getting ulcers, a bad heart, and a worse disposition while at it.

Not so when you are thrown into these gatherings and people begin to express approval and admiration for the guy who brought in the roasted pig, or better still the roasted cow. Or for the guy who flings bills to the kids lined up before him like they were



There's The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Japanese currency during Japanese times. The noises of admiration and approval aren't always quiet and whispered, sometimes they are shouted out loud with accompanying slaps in the back. You half expect the approver to break into a baritone rendition of "For he's a jolly good fellow."

Not so when the relatives and friends go out to admire the new car the cousin has just parked, or the new cell phone the new yuppie in-law is busy toying with or

dividing his attention between party and work with. Christmas being associated with abundance of the material kind, the abundant man is king. These are the small things that kill you if you want to dwell on things loftier, that thrust you into the well-trodden and well-worn path of the jaded and world-weary. You start wondering why this fool is getting rave reviews for having deep pockets while you are merely tolerated for having deep ambitions, you're dead.

Fortunately, Christmas too is a good time for reflecting on these things. It is after all the birth of the Christ-child. I've always thought it deeply ironic that we are supremely devoted to the Christ-child (many of our towns and villages have the Sto. Niño for patron saint) while often missing out on the things we naturally attribute to children, which are innocence, purity, optimism, boundlessness, idealism, loftiness, simplicity. Christmas is about abundance, but it is not the abundance of the body, it is abundance of the spirit.

Christmas too is a time for reflecting on the sublime paradox, and wisdom, of what Christ said that you have to become like a child to enter the kingdom of God. You don't have to be particularly religious to appreciate that. You can always take that to mean that you have to remain youthful in spirit if not in body to know the meaning of joy.

Merry Christmas everyone.

The Christmas Eve uprising of 1639

It was a rough but merry Christmas in Intramuros in 1639. A serious Chinese revolt had been dealt with, leaving many casualties. The Spanish flag remained flying in Intramuros, the Chinese had been crushed yet again.

I remembered this botched 17th century revolt as I patiently waited in line to get into the mall or the MRT recently. Security (or the theatrical motions of it) was in place to give shoppers and commuters a false sense of safety in the age of terrorism. I don't know why we bother. Either you do a thorough and inconvenient search, or not do it at all because all we have today are just inconvenient cursory searches. Have you ever wondered if the hand-held metal detectors used by security guards work at all? These devices are often placed prominently on a table, the guards preferring to poke at our belongings with that unique Philippine anti-terrorist device: a barbecue stick! When you go to the airport, you are flagged down and a guard gives the inside of your car a bored look. Before he waves you in, he asks that you open the glove compartment as if a trained terrorist will leave a gun or bomb lying in that small space. Will the guards recognize a bomb when they actually see a dismantled one in a knapsack?

These days we have a Christmas truce, no military or insurgent activity for a number of days. In the past, Christmas was also peaceful, except for a Chinese uprising set in 1639. The plot looked simple enough: The long oppressed Chinese who greatly outnumbered the Spaniards within the walls were to take over the city on Christmas Eve and thus, symbolically, take possession of the rest of the colony.

The Chinese were asked to leave Intramuros at night and were mostly settled in a place called the Parian around the area now known as Liwasang Bonifacio and near the Metropolitan Theater. The plot, set for the evening of Dec. 24, called for some Chinese to enter the city during the day carry-

ing gifts of fowl to their Spanish friends and acquaintances and to remain inside. Others would enter the city while the sentries manning the gates and the rest of the citizens were distracted by the performance of a comedia or two outside the main gates. Once they had critical mass, and at an appointed time or given signal, they were to kill all Spaniards in sight and take the city.

Unfortunately, like all failed plots in our history that require precision and timing, this one failed because nobody came on time. It was not that they came late; rather they started too early! An uprising in Calamba led to the discovery of the bigger plot. Manila's inadequate defenses were reinforced by friars turned soldiers who wore their religious habits in battle, and by their prayers and gallantry rallied people to God and the Spanish flag.

In "Relacion verdadera del levantamiento de los Sangleyes" (True relation of the Sangley insurrection) Madrid, 1642 as translated in volume 29 of Blair and Robertson, we have the outcome in summary:

"Calamba is twelve leguas from Manila. The Chinese corresponded with a Chinese pirate named Yquan Sanglus; it was arranged that he should come to aid them on Christmas Eve 1639 (the date set for the treason), and to capture the galleons from New Spain [Mexico]. There were 35,000 licensed Sangleyes in Manila and its vicinity, besides 10,000 more in remote provinces. [This figure goes up even further if we are to take into account undocumented Chinese.] In Manila at this time there were thirty foot soldiers, thirty horsemen, fifty Japanese, and seventy Siyaos [whatever that means]."

One cannot understand why such a small force de-



Looking Back

By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

fending the walled city was able to repel a force of over 50,000 Chinese. Of course, the Spaniards were defended by loyal troops from Pampanga, and they also had St. Francis, who was then considered the "Seraphic Protector of Manila." St. Francis is revered today as patron of pets, but this kind saint was alleged to have appeared on the ramparts of Manila in the 17th century brandishing a flaming sword that killed and drove away a host of Chinese insurgents. Friar

chronicles are a curious mix of fact and legend.

"The value of the goods destroyed in the Parian was 5,000,000 pesos; and the houses (built of molave), with the church and the stone houses altogether were worth 2,000,000 pesos. [Nipa huts and other more modest dwellings are not in the inventory so the value of houses and goods destroyed by this uprising goes up considerably.] Twenty champans brought to Mariveles the Sangleyes from neighboring provinces to join the Manila insurgents; but a Spanish and Pampango force went out against them, who sank eleven of the champans and killed six hundred and fifty men. Among the troops levied by the governor were a company of Japanese and two of Sangley mestizos. Chinese prisoners confessed that their general had offered, to each Sangley who should bring in a Spanish head a large reward, including a Spanish woman to be his wife. A body of religious from all the orders, aided by some Indios and ten soldiers, undertook to defend the passage across the [Pasig] river, and killed many of the enemy. On Feb. 24, 1640, the starving Sangleyes, numbering of 7,793, surrendered."

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari



BIRTHDAY SHOUT-OUT

Happy birthday and merry Christmas to Franni O. Pineda, who celebrated her birthday on Dec. 25, 2008, at Aquarius Hotel. "May the good Lord shower you with good health, happiness and success in life. We love you so much." Greetings come from your husband Jhey, your loving son JP, and your friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"Happy birthday, Narissa Kani! Wishing you a wonderful day and many more to come. We love and miss you very much!" Greetings from your Daddy, Grandma and Grandpa, and the rest of the familias.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The New City International Construction held its Christmas Party for all employees last Dec. 21 at Shirley's Susupe.



JAYVEE VALLEJERA

HOLIDAY GET-TOGETHER

The Limon family celebrates Christmas Eve with friends and family at their residence in Susupe.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

VIP CHRISTMAS PARTY

Marlon Estigoy, left, and his friends celebrated Christmas with a potluck get-together at Aquarius Beach Tower in Chalan Kanoa.



Northern Marianas College

P.O. Box 501250 • Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A. • Phone: (670) 234-5498
Fax: (670) 234-0759 • Web Site: www.nmncet.edu

Regular Meeting of the Board of Regents

Board of Regents Conference room, NMC - Saipan Campus
Tuesday, December 30, 2008
3:30pm

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

- Roll Call
- Review & Adoption of Agenda
- Review & Adoption of Minutes
 - September 25, 2008 – Regular Meeting

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. REPORTS

- BOR Standing Committees
- President
- Associated Students of NMC
- Faculty Senate
- Staff Senate
- CFAO Financial Report

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- WASC Accreditation Update - Review Dec. 31 Show Cause Supplementary Report

V. NEW BUSINESS

- President's Evaluation

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VII. ADJOURNMENT

/s/Regent Charles V. Cepeda
Chairperson, BOR

December 29, 2008



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax, (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp



PUBLIC NOTICE

(This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD Funds.)

Governor Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairman, Mr. Manuel A. Sablan, wish to announce that its Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER) for Program Year 2007, is available for review and comments by the general public no later than December 28, 2008. The office will be open on Sunday, December 28, 2008 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Written comments must be submitted to the NMHC Office in Garapan, Saipan, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or by contacting Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Planner/Grant Writer, at 234-9447/7689.

The report will be submitted to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Honolulu Office, by December 29, 2008. The CAPER encompasses the performance assessment of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership Act (HOME) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Programs in the Commonwealth.

The report is available at the NMHC Central Office in Saipan and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Rota and Tinian during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/
Merced M. Tomokane
Acting Chairwoman of the Board



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax, (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp



NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER OF SALE IN DEED OF TRUST

NOVA ANN T. QUITUGUA and RAY J. TAITAGUE (collectively "Trustor"), on or about September 24, 1998, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on September 28, 1998, under Document No. 98-3008 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 330 R 232, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 924 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS SHOWN ON THE DIVISION OF LANDS AND SURVEY'S OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 330 R 03, DATED MARCH 13, 1992, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 92-861, DATED MARCH 16, 1992, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on September 12, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will on **January 15, 2009**, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **\$26,930.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairperson of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **January 14, 2009, at 4:00 p.m.** All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than **January 14, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.** Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The further right is reserved, in the absence of satisfactory bids for the outright sale of the said parcel of real property to a qualified buyer, to offer such property at the same time and place, or at a later time, for long-term lease to any person on the usual terms and conditions for long term leases of real property offered by the Trustee to the highest bidder for such lease. The minimum bid amount of **\$26,930.00** shall also apply with lump sum payment for the term of the lease.

The lease shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The lease price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Dated this 10th day of December 2008.

By: _____/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director, at 234-6866/9447 for more information.

*****NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency*****

Youngstyle

KIDSDAY BOOKS: KIDS' RECOMMENDED READING

By KIDSDAY STAFF REPORTERS
NEWSDAY

'Stan Lee's Amazing Marvel Universe'

Reviewed by Christopher Coyle, Kidsday Reporter



I highly recommend "Stan Lee's Amazing Marvel Universe" (Sterling Publishing; \$50) for the comic book fan. This book contains more than 200 pages of illustrations and interesting facts about favorite Marvel superheroes, including Spider-Man, the Incredible Hulk and the X-Men. But the book's most amazing feature is its side panel, where you press a button and hear 68 recorded tracks of comic book legend Stan Lee talking about his career, his creations and more.

'ARK ANGEL'

Reviewed By Murali Varadaraj, Kidsday Reporter

"Ark Angel" (Philomel Books, \$17.99), part of the Alex Rider series by Anthony Horowitz, is a wonderful book. Fourteen-year-old Alex carries a burden that would seem overwhelming to anybody, young or old. He is a

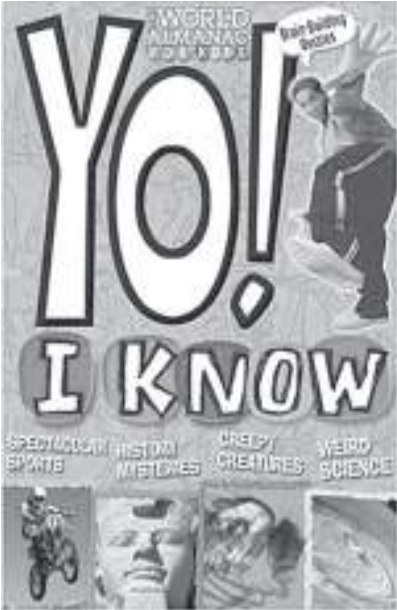


spy for MI6, the British Secret Intelligence Service. The story begins with Alex in the hospital, because he was shot in the chest by a sniper. As he is recuperating, he becomes friends with a young boy named Paul Drevin, who is in the hospital because of appendicitis. Paul's father is the fourth-richest man on Earth and is creating a new era by constructing a space hotel called Ark Angel. One night, Alex wakes up with a sense of dread and foreboding. He goes to the hospital entrance and a dramatic scene meets his eyes. Four hooded men have stalked into the hospital and are questioning the receptionist. One pulls out an illegally smuggled FP9 automatic pistol and shoots the receptionist in the head. Alex is spotted and asked if he is Paul Drevin. Alex protects the real boy by responding that he is, and suddenly he finds himself captured and held hostage by the assassins! The real question is: Why do they want to kidnap the son of such a wealthy man? Money would seem

an obvious motive, but no. Something much deeper and darker lies within the realm of possibilities. Horowitz's books allow the reader to connect with Alex's emotions as well as the tantalizing story line. "Ark Angel" is a brilliant moment-to-moment, non-stop thriller, recommended for ages 11 and older.

'Yo! I Know'

Reviewed by Alex Clanton and Joe Sirna, Kidsday Reporters



We read the book called "Yo! I Know." It has brain-building puzzles, and it is by the editors of The World Almanac for Kids (\$9.99). We think it is a good book because it asks questions that are easy. On another page are the answers with explanations. There are quizzes about sports, history, creepy creatures and science. We think people should get this book because it is fun, and it will make you smarter.

KIDSDAY VIDEO GAMES: KIDS' VIDEO GAME REVIEWS

By KIDSDAY STAFF REPORTERS
NEWSDAY

Diddy Kong Racing Video Game

By MARIELYS CRUZ, KAYLA GROSSI, BRYAN ROLON and KRISTI TROHA
KIDSDAY REPORTERS



We got to try out the new Diddy Kong Racing game (\$34.99). This game was really fun, and because it is for the Nintendo DS, it can be played anywhere. You are given 12 players, but at first you can play only 8 of them. If you can move on to the next level of play, you can unlock the next 4. If you do really well, you can make up a player with your own icon. The object of the game is to race to find a magic lamp, rub it and move to the next level. You must collect balloons and coins along the way that can help you to buy a better vehicle or give you the skills you'll need to move on. The 12 players race in cars, hovercrafts and planes, and

they have names like Diddy Kong, Tiny Kong, Dixie Kong, Bumper and Timber. The graphics are colorful, and working toward the next level is challenging, once you get past level 4. Younger kids would like this game, too, because the earlier levels are easier to play. The other neat thing about it is that it is played on a touch screen with a stylus. We give it a 4 (out of 5).

Brain Age Video Game

By VANESSA RINCON and SEAN SULLIVAN
KIDSDAY REPORTERS



We reviewed the Nintendo DS game Brain Age (\$19.99). We think the game Brain Age is loads of fun. It teaches you and tests you about how much you know. You have to solve simple math and logic problems quickly. If you are having a hard time, you can ask the game for help. If there is a part you are not too good at, you can try again until you be-

come good at it. If you have this game, you can have fun and learn a lot in a fun and exciting way. We recommend this game for everyone from ages 8 to 108! It makes learning fun. We give this game a 5 (out of 5).

Charlotte's Web Video Game

By CHIBUEZE EZENYILIMBA
KIDSDAY REPORTER

Charlotte's Web (\$29.99, Nintendo DS) is great! I would recommend it to kids ages 4 to 7, and if you love the movie "Charlotte's Web." You'll love it because you get to be Wilbur the pig and you also can be Tempelton the rat. This is a challenging game because you get to enter into four different fantasy adventures and you have to complete some very exciting missions. Along the way, you get to play some arcade games, too.



For kids, it's not about playing to win

By FRED BOWEN
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Bowen writes sports novels for kids.

It's the time of the year when all the major professional sports are in action. Everyone pays so much attention to pro sports that sometimes when kids play sports, parents, coaches and kids think young athletes should be mini-professionals.

But kids aren't pros, and pros aren't kids. Maybe this is a good time to remind everyone of some important differences between the games we watch on TV and the games kids play.

Pros play to win. Professional sports are a big business. Many people's jobs and millions of dollars can depend on which athlete or team is crowned champion. Kids should play to learn about competing, improve their skills and have fun. Winning is great, but it shouldn't be the only reason kids play sports.

In pro sports, if a player does not play well, the team cuts him. Take the Washington Redskins' punter at the start of this season, Durant Brooks. He had a couple of bad games, and the Redskins got rid of him. Though some travel teams cut kids, I don't think they should. Coaches and teams should give kids time to improve.

Pros push their bodies so hard that they often play hurt. Think of the injury

list before every NFL game or remember when Tiger Woods won the U.S. Open on a broken leg. But professional athletes are adults, and they can decide for themselves whether playing hurt is worth the risk.

Kids should never play hurt. No game, even a championship game, is worth the risk of further injuring a young athlete. Parents and coaches should remember that it is more important to keep kids healthy so they can enjoy sports for a lifetime than to win some trophy for 12-year-olds.

Very few professional athletes play more than one sport. The competition at the top is so tough that pros have to concentrate on their one sport and work year-round to keep up their skills. Kids should play more than one sport. Playing different sports helps kids become better all-around athletes and avoid injuries. It also helps kids from getting burned out on one sport.

Elena Delle Donne, a basketball player so good that she is known as "the female LeBron James," quit basketball this summer to play college volleyball. After playing hoops exclusively for years—Delle Donne has had a personal trainer since the second grade—she stopped. "The sport ended up dying for me," she said.

So enjoy watching all the pro sports action. Just don't forget that the reason kids should be playing sports is for the fun of it.

Youth Sports Fact

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

In the United States, about 30 million children and teens participate in organized sports. At least 3.5 million injuries occur each year, mostly sprains and strains.

KIDSDAY SMILES: Jokes for Kids

By KIDSDAY STAFF REPORTERS
NEWSDAY

Why did the toilet go to the doctor?
It was feeling flushed.

Knock, knock. Who's there?
Water. Water who?
Water friends for?

Sister: Mom wants you to come in and fix dinner.
Brother: Why, is it broken?

Kid: Do you have something to cure fleas on my dog?
Pet Shop Owner: I don't know. What's wrong with the fleas?

Knock, knock. Who's there?
House.
House who?
House it going?

What do you call a dinosaur that's

never late?
Pronto-saurus
What do you call dinosaurs that are always walking in mud?
Brown-toe-saurus

Why did the campers bring a baseball player with them?
To pitch a tent.

What is brown and hairy and wears sunglasses?
A coconut on vacation.

Why did the man dance in front of the bottle?
It said: Twist to open.

Do zombies eat popcorn with their fingers?
Nope! They eat their fingers separately.

Why did the ocean take the afternoon off?
It wanted to play gulf.

Life & Style

Eartha Kitt, sultry 'Santa Baby' singer, dies

NEW YORK (AP)—Eartha Kitt, a sultry singer, dancer and actress who rose from South Carolina cotton fields to become an international symbol of elegance and sensuality, has died, a family spokesman said. She was 81.

Andrew Freedman said Kitt, who was recently treated at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, died Thursday in Connecticut of colon cancer.

Kitt, a self-proclaimed "sex kitten" famous for her catlike purr, was one of America's most versatile performers, winning two Emmys and nabbing a third nomination. She also was nominated for several Tonys and two Grammys.

Her career spanned six decades, from her start as a dancer with the famed Katherine Dunham troupe to cabarets and acting and singing on stage, in movies and on television. She persevered through an unhappy childhood as a mixed-race daughter of the South and made headlines in the 1960s for denouncing the Vietnam War during a visit to the White House.

Through the years, Kitt remained a picture of vitality and attracted fans less than half her age even as she neared 80.

When her book "Rejuvenate," a guide to staying physically fit, was published in 2001, Kitt was featured on the cover in a long, curve-hugging black dress with a figure that some 20-year-old women would envy. Kitt also wrote three autobiographies.

Once dubbed the "most exciting woman in the world" by Orson Welles, she spent much of her life single, though brief romances with the rich and famous peppered her younger years.

After becoming a hit singing "Monotonous" in the Broadway revue "New Faces of 1952," Kitt appeared in "Mrs. Patterson" in 1954-55. (Some references say she earned a Tony nomination for "Mrs. Patterson," but only winners were publicly announced at that time.) She also made appearances in "Shinbone Alley" and "The Owl and the Pussycat."

Her first album, "RCA Victor Presents Eartha Kitt," came out in 1954, featuring such songs as "I Want to Be Evil," "C'est Si Bon" and the saucy gold digger's theme song "Santa Baby," which is revived on radio each Christmas.

The next year, the record company released follow-up album "That Bad Eartha," which

featured "Let's Do It," "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and "My Heart Belongs to Daddy."

In 1996, she was nominated for a Grammy in the category of traditional pop vocal performance for her album "Back in Business." She also had been nominated in the children's recording category for the 1969 record "Folk Tales of the Tribes of Africa."

Kitt also acted in movies, playing the lead female role opposite Nat King Cole in "St. Louis Blues" in 1958 and more recently appearing in "Boomerang" and "Harriet the Spy" in the 1990s. On television, she was the sexy Catwoman on the popular "Batman" series in 1967-68, replacing Julie Newmar who originated the role. A guest appearance on an episode of "I Spy" brought Kitt an Emmy nomination in 1966.

"Generally the whole entertainment business now is bland," she said in a 1996 Associated Press interview. "It depends so much on gadgetry and flash now. You don't have to have talent to be in the business today."

"I think we had to have something to offer, if you wanted to be recognized as worth paying for."

Kitt was plainspoken about



This March 6, 2008 file photo shows actress Eartha Kitt at the Broadhurst Theatre in New York.

causes she believed in. Her anti-war comments at the White House came as she attended a

White House luncheon hosted by Lady Bird Johnson.

"You send the best of this

country off to be shot and maimed," she told the group of about 50 women. "They rebel in the street. They don't want to go to school because they're going to be snatched off from their mothers to be shot in Vietnam."

For four years afterward, Kitt performed almost exclusively overseas. She was investigated by the FBI and CIA, which allegedly found her to be foul-mouthed and promiscuous.

"The thing that hurts, that became anger, was when I realized that if you tell the truth—in a country that says you're entitled to tell the truth—you get your face slapped and you get put out of work," Kitt told Essence magazine two decades later.

In 1978, Kitt returned to Broadway in the musical "Timbuktu!"—which brought her a Tony nomination—and was invited back to the White House by President Jimmy Carter.

In 2000, Kitt earned another Tony nod for "The Wild Party." She played the fairy godmother in Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella" in 2002.

As recently as October 2003, she was on Broadway after replacing Chita Rivera in a revival of "Nine."

Nobel Laureate Harold Pinter dies at 78

LONDON (AP)—British Nobel laureate Harold Pinter—who produced some of his generation's most influential dramas and later became a staunch critic of the U.S.-led war in Iraq—has died, his widow said Thursday. He was 78.

Pinter died Wednesday after a long battle with cancer, according to his second wife Antonia Fraser.

In recent years he had seized the platform offered by his 2005 Nobel Literature prize to denounce President George W. Bush, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and the war in Iraq.

But he was best known for exposing the complexities of the emotional battlefield.

His writing featured cool, menacing pauses in dialogue that reflected his characters' deep emotional struggles and spawned a new adjective found in several dictionaries: "Pinter-esque."

"Pinter restored theater to its basic elements: an enclosed space and unpredictable dialogue, where people are at the mercy of each other and pretense crumbles," the Nobel Academy said. "With a minimum of plot, drama emerges from the power struggle and hide-and-seek of interlocution."

His characters' internal fears and longings, their guilt and difficult sexual drives were set against the neat lives they constructed in order to try to sur-

vive. Usually enclosed in one room, the acts usually illustrated the characters' lives as a sort of grim game with actions that of-



This is a Jan. 17, 2007, file photo of Nobel-winning British playwright Harold Pinter, wearing the French Legion d'honneur that he was awarded by French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin, at the French Embassy in London.

ten contradicted words. Gradually, the layers were peeled back. "How can you write a happy play?" he once said. "Drama is about conflict and degrees of perturbation, disarray. I've never been able to write a happy play, but I've been able to enjoy a happy life."

Pinter wrote 32 plays; one nov-

el, "The Dwarfs," in 1990; and put his hand to 22 screenplays.

The working-class milieu of his first dramas reflected his early life as the son of a Jewish tailor from London's East End. Born Oct. 30, 1930, in the London neighborhood of Hackney, he was forced along with other children during World War II to evacuate to rural Cornwall in 1939. He was 14 before he returned. By then, he was entranced with Franz Kafka and Ernest Hemingway.


By 1950, Pinter had begun to publish poetry and appeared on stage as an actor. Pinter began to write for the stage, and published "The Room" in 1957.

A year later, his first major play, "The Birthday Party" was produced in the West End.

In it, intruders enter the retreat of Stanley, a young man who is hiding from childhood guilt. He becomes violent, telling them, "You stink of sin, you contaminate womankind."

The play closed after just one week to disastrous reviews, but Pinter continued to write and was most prolific between 1957 and 1965.

"With his earliest work, he stood alone in British theater up against the bewilderment and incomprehension of critics, the audience and writers, too," British playwright Tom Stoppard said when the Nobel Prize was announced.



First Year Anniversary of her New Life

We, the Family of the Late

ELIZABETH MILAGRO FLORES CAMACHO

Would like to invite our Relatives and Friends
To the Celebration of the First Year Anniversary of our Beloved's
New Life with daily rosaries and masses.

The Rosary will be prayed at 5:15 pm daily beginning
on December 28, 2008 followed by the Mass at 6:00 pm
at San Roque Church.

On the last day - Monday, January 5, 2009, the Rosary will be prayed
at 4:00 pm followed by the Mass at 4:30 pm
at San Roque Church.

Dinner follows at the Residence of Zeno and Tina Guerrero
in San Roque.

Your Presence, Thoughts and Prayers are greatly appreciated.

Si Yuus Maase/Thank You
from the Children and Family

Nazi themes dominate holiday cinema season

LOS ANGELES (AP)—'Tis the season to gather, be grateful for what we have and share what we can. But for cinephiles, it's awards season, and that means dreary fare—particularly with a World War II or Holocaust focus. No fewer than six are set for release this holiday season.

In theaters now are "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas," which tells the story of a forbidden friendship between the son of a Nazi officer and a Jewish boy imprisoned in a concentration camp; "The Reader," which stars Kate Winslet as a former concentration-camp guard on trial years after the war; and "Adam Resurrected," which follows a Holocaust survivor (Jeff Goldblum) living in a mental institution.

"Valkyrie," which opens on Christmas day, stars Tom Cruise as a German officer who heads up a plan to kill Hitler. And two more Nazi-oriented films open on New Year's Eve: "Defiance" stars Daniel Craig and Liev Schreiber as brothers who battle the Nazis from a secret hideout in the woods, and "Good" features Viggo Mortensen as an academic and novelist reluctantly enticed into the SS fold after he's approached to write some mild



In this image released by MGM, Tom Cruise portrays Claus von Stauffenberg, left, and Carice Van Houten portrays his wife, Nina, in "Valkyrie."

propaganda for the Nazi party.

In a recent interview, Cruise joked: "Go kill Hitler on Christmas!"

So why, during what's supposed to be the cheeriest time of year, this abundance of stories from one of humanity's darkest hours?

"Much of it is awards-driven," said Paul Dergarabedian,

president of Media By Numbers, which tracks box-office totals. "Downer movies come out this time of year as a reflection of the fact that people are vying for Oscars."

Indeed, Holocaust-themed holiday releases have fared well with academy voters for decades. "Sophie's Choice," a December release in 1982, earned five Oscar

nominations and a win for star Meryl Streep. "Schindler's List" was nominated for 12 Oscars and won seven—including best picture—after its release in December of 1993. "The Pianist" opened two days after Christmas in 2002. It was nominated for seven Oscars and won three, including best actor for star Adrien Brody and best director for Roman Polanski.

'Sopranos' actor 'Johnny Cakes' dead in suicide

NEW YORK (AP)—Police say the actor who portrayed the gay lover of a closeted mobster on "The Sopranos" has died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in New York.

Police spokesman Lt. John Grimpel says John Costelloe was found dead in an apparent suicide at his Brooklyn home on Dec. 18.

Police were called to his residence after family members

were unable to reach him.

The 47-year-old former New York City firefighter gained fame in 2006 when he was cast as short-order cook Jim "Johnny Cakes" Witowski opposite

Joseph Gannascoli, who played gay mobster Vito Spatafore on the hit HBO show. Costelloe was performing as a hustler in a theater production of "Gang of Seven" at the time of his death.

Dance, dance, dance! Obama will have 10 parties

WASHINGTON (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, will twirl their way through 10 official inaugural balls on Jan. 20.

The Presidential Inaugural Committee said Wednesday that the Obamas would attend 10 official balls, one more than President George W. Bush and Laura Bush attended in 2005.

For ball-goers and Obama-watchers, a few questions remain: What will Michelle Obama wear? Who will perform? And will young daughters Sasha and Malia attend?

No word from the committee on those fronts.

Six of the official balls will be held at the Washington Convention Center, with others at Union Station, the Washington Hilton, the National Building Museum and the DC Armory.

But the biggest parties this



In this Nov. 4, 2008 file photo, President-elect Barack Obama, left, kisses his wife Michelle Obama after addressing supporters at the election night rally in Chicago.

time may well be unofficial.

MTV and BET are throwing televised parties, while the Creative Coalition will hold a

gala to be headlined by Elvis Costello. Dionne Warwick is hosting the American Music Inaugural Ball.

Jazz pianist-singer Page Cavanaugh dies at 86

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jazz pianist and singer Page Cavanaugh, whose popular trio in the 1940s and 1950s played in motion pictures and on Frank Sinatra's radio show, has died at 86.

Cavanaugh died of kidney failure Dec. 19 at a nursing home in San Fernando Valley, said Phil Mallory, his bass player of 18 years.

The Page Cavanaugh Trio was one of Southern California's most popular nightclub acts from the 1940s to the 1990s, performing at Ciro's, the Trocadero, the Captain's Table, the Money Tree and the Balboa Bay Club.

The group played in the film "Romance on the High Seas" with Jack Carson and Doris Day. The trio showed up in

movies such as "A Song Is Born," "Big City" and "Lullaby of Broadway."

Cavanaugh's trio also appeared with Frank Sinatra on his "Songs By Sinatra" radio show and played for NBC Radio's "The Jack Paar Show."

Their hits included "The Three Bears" and "She Had to Go and Lose It At the Astor."

Woman is reluctant benchmark for co-worker losing weight

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I need some advice on how to handle a delicate situation at work because it's starting to get to me.

One of my co-workers, "Vicki," is overweight. She has been dieting and having some success with it. I support her efforts and am happy for her. However, she constantly makes comments to and about me. I often hear her comparing our looks, and I have heard her saying that we wear the same size. Abby, we don't.

As with many women, I struggle to maintain a positive body image. Vicki's constant comparisons are now shaking my confidence. It is the persistence of her remarks that is getting to me. I don't understand why she feels it is appropriate to comment on my body, size or looks. I didn't ask to be used as a benchmark for her weight loss. Should I say something or keep quiet?

MEDIUM-SIZED IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR MEDIUM-SIZED: Vicki envies and admires your looks. Like it or not, you are her "role model." She is also in denial about the way she actually looks. Because her constant comments bother you to the extent they do, you should definitely tell her she is making you self-conscious and ask her to stop. And if she doesn't comply, ask your boss to get the message across to her that her behavior is inappropriate.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My mother-in-law is insisting that she have my 8-month-old daughter "Mallory's" ears pierced. I am refusing. I do not want Mallory to be uncomfortable during the procedure or afterward. I have enough to worry about without adding fears of infected earlobes or my little one choking on jewelry parts. Mallory is just a baby—MY baby.

My mother-in-law says she will "slip off" and have Mallory's ears pierced and I won't be able to do anything about it. Furthermore, when I said I didn't feel it was necessary to explain why I was against the idea, my father-in-law stood up and told me to get out of his #@&! house. I took Mallory and left.

Two weeks later, they called my husband and asked to babysit. They have never apologized. I'm afraid they will pierce my baby's ears if she's left alone with them. What do I do?

MALLORY'S MOM IN GEORGIA

DEAR MOM: I'll tell you what you DON'T do—you do not allow your in-laws to baby-sit your daughter until you are absolutely sure your wishes about her care will be followed.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: For the past 10 years I have put up with my husband's manipulative ex-wife. I am tired of her using their boys as a way to get my husband to do things. Don't get me wrong -- I know my husband "has" to do things for his boys. But there are times when she could manage for herself without him.

Abby, this woman still keeps their wedding picture on her fireplace. My question is: Do you think she is still in love with him?

WONDERING IN HOUSTON

DEAR WONDERING: Whether your husband's ex-wife is still in love with him should be of no concern to you—as long as he is not still in love with her. She may keep the wedding picture on her mantle for the sake of her sons, as proof that at one time she was actually a size 6, or even that she was once loved by someone.

You have nothing to gain—and a great deal to lose—by harboring resentment against her. She will always be a part of your lives because she is your stepsons' mother, and she will be a grandmother to their children. If you are wise, you'll accept it, not obsess and move on.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

WB shrouds 'Dark Knight' from Chinese audiences

HONG KONG (AP)—Batman landed in Hong Kong but that doesn't mean "The Dark Knight" will open all over China.

The movie opened in Hong Kong theaters. But Warner Bros. decided not to release the film in mainland China—or even submit it for censors' approval—because of "prerelease conditions" and "cultural sensitivities," the studio said Tuesday.

Warner Bros. officials may have been concerned the film—particularly scenes shot in Hong Kong, where Batman nabs a gangster—would offend censors. Hong Kong is a Chinese-ruled former British colony that maintains separate political and economic systems.

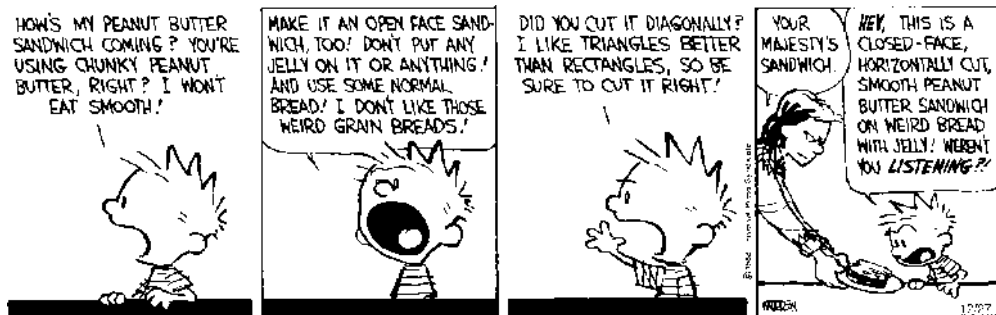
Another possible sticking point is a brief appearance by Hong Kong actor-singer Edison Chen, who appeared in lurid photos with several women this year.

Bootleg copies have been available in Chinese markets for months.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



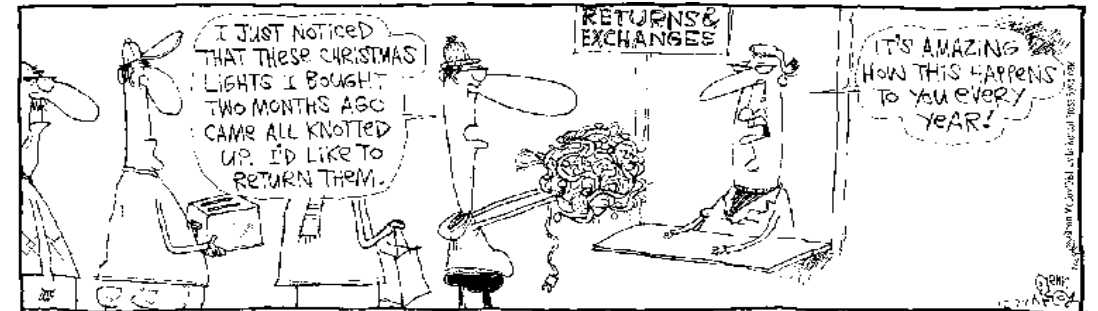
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Toss into the mix

4 Speak sloppily

8 Scattered

12 Muumu accessory

13 Work on the keyboard

14 Small combo

15 Beatnik's interjection

16 "Americana"

17 Erstwhile acorns

18 Lara Croft portrayer

21 Chicken-link

22 Deleted

23 Bloodhound's clues

26 Encountered

27 Definite article

30 Break of a habit

31 Affirmative action?

32 Go like 90

33 Will Ferrell movie

DOWN

1 Mater

2 James or

3 Tinkling sound

4 Photographs

5 Grocho's "Tattooed Lady"

6 Informed about

7 Informal

8 Left one's seat

9 Vaccine type

10 Web page

11 Beezer

19 Deserve

20 Lustrous black

23 Have bills

24 Benicio

25 Luminox

26 Broom-closet item

27 Rocky peak

28 Stoler

29 Ostrich's kin

31 Virginia city

32 Galvanizing material

34 Chum

35 Blockbuster merchandise

36 Gerr

37 Gerstwin hero

38 Congregation's cry

39 Pianist Peter

40 Vanished

41 Curved molding

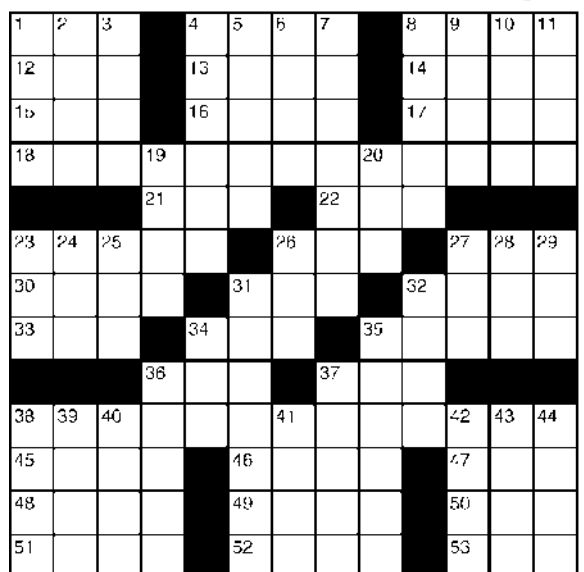
42 Big bothers

43 New Zealander

44 Congers

Solution time: 27 mins.

Yesterday's answer 12-27



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, toll-free/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Matt Koester, 26; Gerard Depardieu, 60; Cokie Roberts, 65; John Amos, 69

Happy Birthday: Do not leave anything to chance or you will miss out on something great. There are many opportunities for you this year but only if you are positioned properly. You have the potential to get things signed, sealed and delivered in personal and financial areas of your life. Great strides forward can be yours if you are relentless. Your numbers are 6, 7, 18, 23, 27, 32, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Tread carefully, say little and give absolutely no one the opportunity to criticize you. Stick close to home and be fully prepared to let bygones be bygones. Overdoing it in any capacity will be your downfall. **

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): There is something good heading your way in terms of lifestyle or information to help you further your goals in the new year. Check out any opportunity that may lead to a better position, place or geographical location. *****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take note of what everyone around you is doing and saying and you will gain information to enable you to make a strategic move. Networking will lead to an interesting turn of events. Invest in something viable for the future. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Put some time and effort into home and family. The more you do to enhance your surroundings or make your place more comfortable, the

more time you can spend with the ones you love. Strive for quality time in the new year. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): There are changes needed for you to feel satisfied with your direction and your future. A change of scenery or plans or picking up information will all help you pull things together. Someone will help you realize your potential. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Networking will bring together a unique group of people who can help you reach your goals and enjoy the benefits as well. Do your best to satisfy your needs and desires and you won't regret the choices you make. *****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take time out to pamper and pursue love. Don't stick around home where idle time will play games with your emotional and mental well-being, leading to arguments. That can be avoided with a well-planned and thoughtful day. **

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): A trip or getting involved in community events or volunteering for something that interests you will all lead to great connections and promises for the future. Promote your talent and your plans. *****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Keep things in perspective. Being practical isn't your nature but, for now, that is the route to take. An unusual relationship you have with someone will prove to be enlightening. Don't let someone ruin your plans by changing his or hers. ***

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will be in

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

a powerful position next year if you get into discussions that can alter your financial or personal outlook. Now is the time to settle any last-minute differences. It's up to you to take control of your future progress. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Start pulling things together and getting organized for what's to come in the new year. Make a few practical decisions about your future and put a plan into place for accomplishing your goals. Don't be afraid to ask for help. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Consider with whom you can best partner. Once you've planted a seed of your ideas, all you will have to do is wait for it to grow. There are profits to be made doing something you have always found fascinating. ****

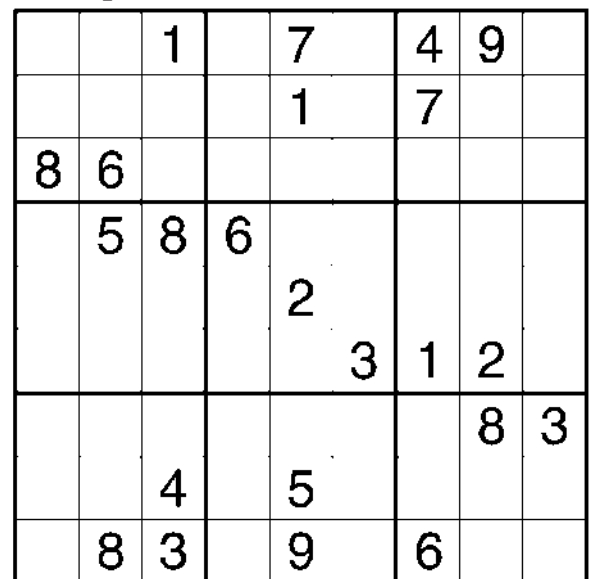
Birthday Baby: You have stamina, determination and a relentless courage. You are outspoken, brave, creative and unique. You welcome a challenge.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

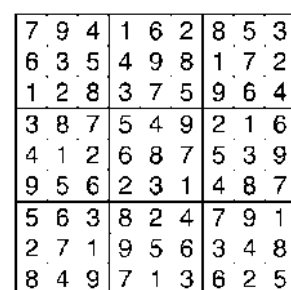


Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/27

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle. Horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The letter letters spell the Wonderword.

DOVER, DELAWARE

Solution: 10 letters



© 2008 Universal Press Syndicate www.wonderword.com

Arts, Atlanta, Baltimore, Base, Beaches, Beauty, Bethany, Caesar, Capital, Cargo, City, Coastal, Colonial, Downs, Dupont, Edge, Events, Green, Growth, Heart, Heritage, Hill, Kent, Lewes, Nasdaq, Park, Philadelphia, Post, Quaker, Racing, Resorts, Rivers, Rodney, Route, Salisbury, Shops, Silver, Sites, Tol, Tour, Toward, View, Wagons, Wilmington

Yesterday's Answer: Reinvent

For more on Wonderword, visit www.wonderword.com or call 1-800-828-8282. For more on the puzzle, visit www.puzzle.com or call 1-800-828-8282. For more on the puzzle, visit www.puzzle.com or call 1-800-828-8282.

©2007 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Plant on mantle is missing. 2. Man has black zipper on sleeve. 3. Plant has more stones. 4. Mirror is missing. 5. Chair is gone. 6. Lamp has added band.

Wishing Well®

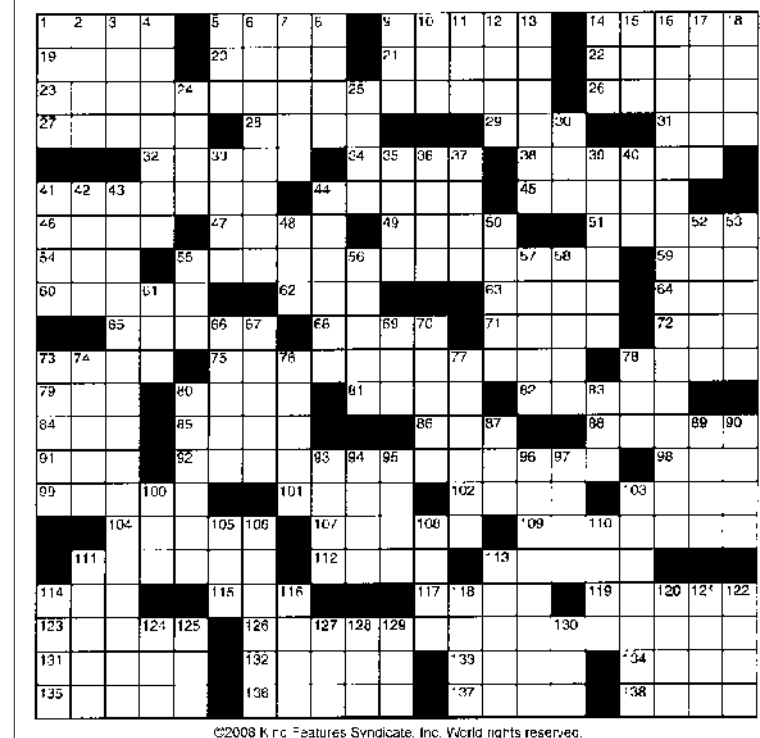
6	3	6	3	2	3	4	2	6	3	5	2	6
M	S	O	P	M	R	B	A	D	E	S	K	E
4	6	7	6	5	3	4	2	5	7	3	5	
E	R	P	A	T	T	A	C	E	A	R	D	R
7	6	2	7	4	6	7	3	5	6	4	2	5
O	E	S	F	O	S	I	J	T	P	U	O	S
7	6	3	8	6	5	3	7	4	2	4	5	6
T	E	O	A	N	M	Y	A	R	M	T	A	D
8	4	7	4	7	2	6	8	6	2	6	2	7
C	E	B	O	L	E	I	H	N	O	G	N	E
4	8	5	8	2	8	2	5	7	4	7	2	8
U	A	L	N	E	G	G	L	C	S	O	L	E
2	7	8	2	7	8	7	8	7	8	7	8	8
A	N	O	D	T	F	A	H	C	O	T	M	E

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

©2008 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

Super Crossword BY ANY OTHER NAME

ACROSS	1 Bert o' Rose	55 Revolution- ary War	101 Part of NB	3 Lie low	40 Chou En- lai	89 Stocking
2 Bert o' Rose	56 Vest egg	102 Literary	41 "Excuse me"	41 "Excuse me"	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
3 Lie low	57 Madame Curie	103 A rool	42 T-90	42 T-90	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
41 "Excuse me"	58 Gold	104 Nick of "Canary Row"	43 Famous nurse?	43 Famous nurse?	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
42 T-90	59 Maiden	107 "The Man" (72 song)	44 Manatee or dugong	44 Manatee or dugong	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
43 Famous nurse?	60 Word form "or" or "and"	109 Moss	45 Sweater letter	45 Sweater letter	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
44 Manatee or dugong	61 Wrapped up	110 Iconic	46 Cover story?	46 Cover story?	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
45 Sweater letter	62 Gymnast	111 Vietnam's "Van Triu"	47 Singer Lopez	47 Singer Lopez	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
46 Cover story?	63 Overdo a tan	112 Painter Paul	48 Common contraction	48 Common contraction	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
47 Singer Lopez	64 Caravanary	113 Baker's appliance	49 "Waking up" (90 film)	49 "Waking up" (90 film)	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
48 Common contraction	65 Safe place?	114 Taradiddle	50 "Devine" (90 film)	50 "Devine" (90 film)	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
49 "Waking up" (90 film)	66 Synchro	115 Fall behind	51 Jack's place	51 Jack's place	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
50 "Devine" (90 film)	67 Tazzy	117 Coup d'	52 "Captain Ron" star?	52 "Captain Ron" star?	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
51 Jack's place	68 Circle	119 Gary of "The Buddy Holly Story"	53 "Squid" (90 film)	53 "Squid" (90 film)	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
52 "Captain Ron" star?	69 Pael's ingredient	123 City of the Mohawk	54 Author Jong	54 Author Jong	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
53 "Squid" (90 film)	70 Wordy Webster	126 "I Dream of Jeannie" star?	55 Farnsworth	55 Farnsworth	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
54 Author Jong	71 Actor Renes	131 Flynn of film	56 "Moo" — gal	56 "Moo" — gal	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
55 Farnsworth	72 Use a dagger	132 Psychodelic image	57 "Say" town	57 "Say" town	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
56 "Moo" — gal	73 Shadowy site?	133 "Winter of Arctice" author	58 "Great of Fire" (90 film)	58 "Great of Fire" (90 film)	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
57 "Say" town	74 Family car	134 Sundance's sweet e	59 St. Vincent	59 St. Vincent	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
58 "Great of Fire" (90 film)	75 Painter	135 S. ck	60 Villay	60 Villay	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
59 St. Vincent	76 Spine start	136 Violist	61 "Squid" (90 film)	61 "Squid" (90 film)	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
60 Villay	77 Fountain order	137 Maesly singer?	62 South African plant	62 South African plant	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
61 "Squid" (90 film)	78 Shoe measure	138 Groucho's gaze	63 Composer Bartok	63 Composer Bartok	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
62 South African plant	79 Move through mud	139 "The Perfect Fool" comic	64 "Rhino" (90 film)	64 "Rhino" (90 film)	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
63 Composer Bartok			65 "Angus" (90 film)	65 "Angus" (90 film)	89 Stocking	89 Stocking
64 "Rhino" (90 film)					89 Stocking	89 Stocking
65 "Angus" (90 film)					89 Stocking	89 Stocking



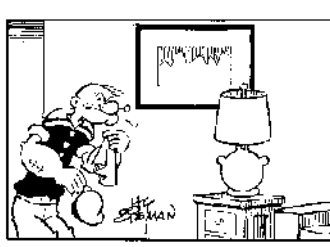
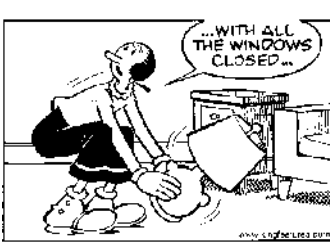
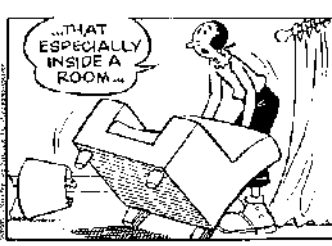
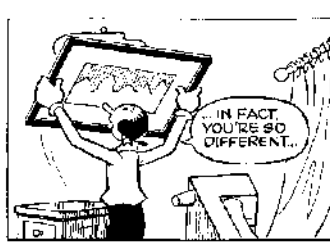
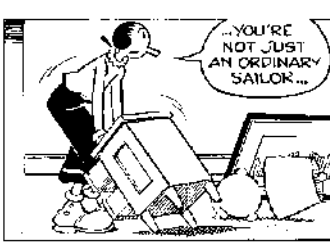
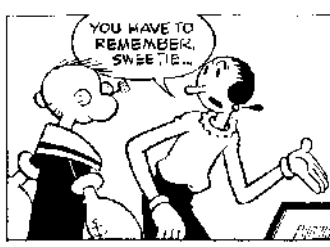
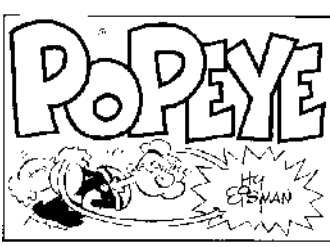
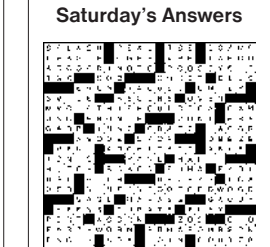
©2008 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.

Trivia test by P. Rodriguez

1. MATH: What mathematical term describes the boundary of a closed plane figure?
2. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: When did Mother Teresa win the Nobel peace prize?
3. HISTORY: What was the native city of explorer Marco Polo?
4. GAMES: How long is a standard bowling lane?
5. ENTERTAINMENT: Which singer was the first to record a "Greatest Hits" album?
6. LANGUAGE: What is a mountebank?
7. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Who did Andrew Jackson marry?
8. POETRY: How many lines are included in a quatrain?
9. ROYALS: Who was Queen Elizabeth II's father, who reigned until his death in 1952?
10. MUSIC: What was the name of the 1960s pop music group that Cass Elliot sang with?

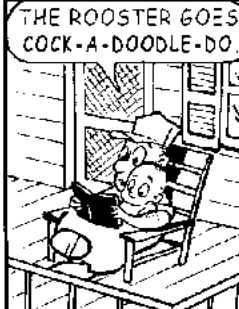
- Answers
1. Perimeter
 2. 1979
 3. Venice, Italy
 4. 60 feet
 5. Johnny Mathis
 6. A charlatan
 7. Rachel Donelson
 8. Four
 9. George VI
 10. The Mamas and The Papas

© 2008 King Features Synd., Inc.



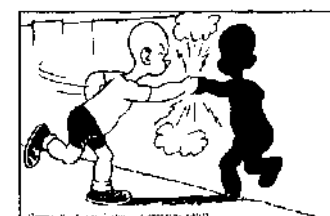
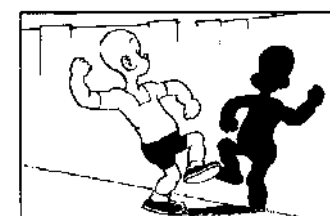
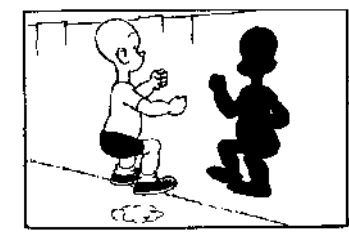
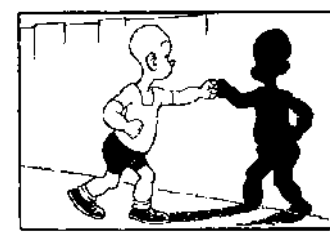
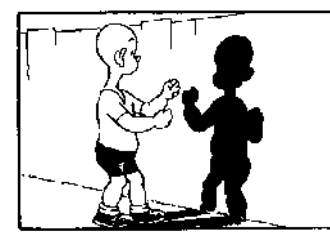
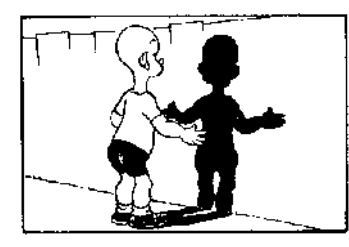
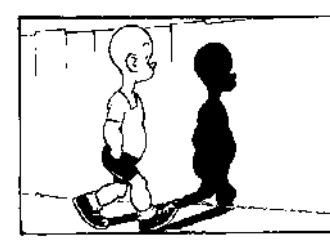
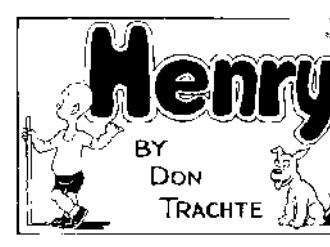
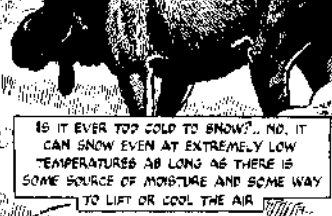
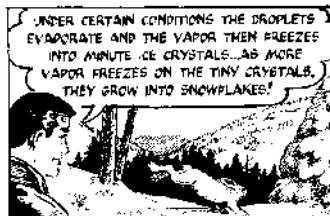
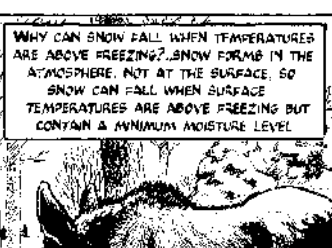
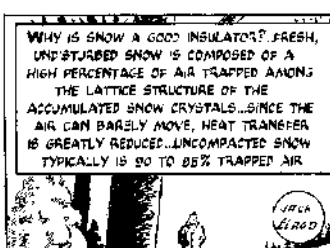
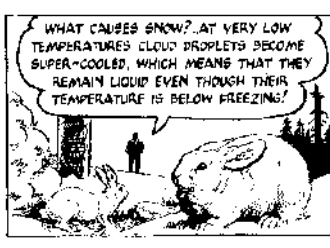
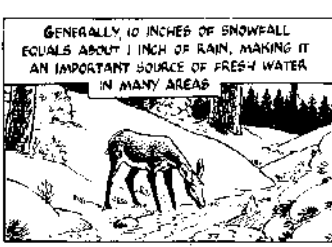
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



CLASSIFIED ADS



Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$25
• 5-Liner	\$35
• 3-Liner with picture	\$45
• 5-Liner with picture	\$55

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:

- *Saipan Tribune*: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met.
No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

MOMENTS

© 2008 WHA-Z™ is a trademark of Paw Sellers
 and is used here by permission. Dogs in Sweden only.

Find today's solution in this section

share the power
of a wish



"I want to go shopping!"

MAKE A WISH®

Visit us at
865 S. Marine Dr., Orlean Pacific Plaza
Ste. 104 Tamuning, Guam 96913
Tel: (671) 649-WISH
Fax: (671) 646-6293
Email: mawfguam@ite.net
www.wish.org
Office Hours: 8:30am to 5:30pm, M-F daily

Ginza Couture Naoco
Vacancy: Wedding Coordinator
Local/IR Only
Japanese Speaking Prefer
Contact Hiromi Matogolai
at 234-3850

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, FF, AC, 24-hr pwr./water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. MIHA applicants accepted. Right behind NMC campus. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

WHATZIT Solution:
Sign of the times

www.saipantribune.com

Advertise your company to the **world!**

The Saipan Tribune website averages 6,994,897 hits and 204,298 visits per month. That's an average of 225,641 hits and 6590 visits per day (average between Aug.-Oct. 2008).

So, don't wait any longer! Contact Kurt Sablan or Absalon Waki at **235-2440/8747/6397** to book your ad space today!

www.saipantribune.com



Bryant, Gasol lead Lakers past Celtics



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Perhaps now the Los Angeles Lakers can put the anguish of losing the NBA finals to Boston and the embarrassment over the way the series ended behind them.

Kobe Bryant had 27 points, nine rebounds and five assists, Pau Gasol scored seven of his 20 points in the final three minutes, and the Lakers beat Boston 92-83 Thursday to snap the Celtics' franchise-record 19-game winning streak.

The game was the first between the teams since the Celtics romped to a 131-92 victory in Game 6 of the finals last June to win their first championship in 22 years and league-high 17th title. The Lakers blew a 24-point second-quarter lead in Game 4 at Staples Center to fall behind 3-1—a deficit that's never been overcome in the finals.

The victory was the 1,000th for Phil Jackson, enabling him to become the sixth NBA coach to reach that milestone. The 63-year-old Jackson has a career record of 1,000-423 in 17-plus seasons as coach of the Chicago Bulls and Lakers. He became the fastest to win 1,000 games, surpassing Pat Riley, who did it in 1,434 games.

"Here we are, a game that's been pointed to since the schedules came out," Jackson said beforehand.

The longtime rivals have met in the NBA finals 11 times, with the Celtics going 9-2.

The Celtics entered with a 27-2 record—the fastest start by a two-loss team. They were in pretty good shape when Kevin Garnett put them ahead 81-79 with 3:57 remaining, but the Lakers went on a 13-2 run to finish the game.

Lamar Odom had 10 points and seven rebounds, and Sasha Vujacic also scored 10 for the Lakers (24-5), who won their 12th straight game at home, where they're 15-1. Andrew Bynum, who missed most of last season and the playoffs with an injured knee, had nine points and seven rebounds.

Garnett shot 11-of-14 in leading the Celtics (27-3) with 22 points, and he also had nine rebounds. Paul Pierce added 20 points and 10 rebounds, but didn't score in the fourth quarter. Ray Allen scored 14 and Rajon Rondo had 12 assists for Boston.

A 15-foot jumper by Gasol with 2:48 snapped an 81-all tie and put the Lakers ahead for good. Allen's 3-pointer failed, and Gasol scored

from close range off an assist from Bryant with two minutes left, putting Los Angeles up by four and sending the crowd of 18,997 into a frenzy.

Garnett answered with a jumper to draw the Celtics within two, but Gasol's three-point play with 1:28 left put the Lakers on top 88-83. Gasol then blocked a 3-pointer by Allen, setting up Trevor Ariza for a dunk that gave Los Angeles a seven-point lead with 1:12 to go. Bryant's basket completed the scoring.

Boston's Eddie House made his only basket with 8:09 remaining to tie it at 75. Neither team led by more than two points after that until the Lakers took command down the stretch.

Pierce scored five points and Allen added three during an 8-0 run that put Boston ahead 64-62. Then, with Bryant on the bench, Odom made two 3-pointers, and the Lakers outscored the Celtics 9-3 to finish the third period

and take a 71-67 lead.

Vujacic scored eight points and Bryant added six during a 16-5 run to begin the second quarter, giving the Lakers a 39-29 lead, and they were on top 51-45 at halftime. The Celtics shot 2-of-13 to begin the period and 7-of-12 to finish it. Boston attempted only two free throws in the half—by Pierce with 13.5 seconds left.

Neither team led by more than three in the first quarter, which ended with the Celtics on top 24-23. Boston shot 61.1 percent to 47.6 percent for the Lakers, but committed six turnovers.

Magic 88, Hornets 68

In Orlando, Florida, the Southeast Division-leading Orlando notched a sixth straight victory by thumping New Orleans.

Hedo Turkoglu scored 20 points, and Dwight Howard had 12 points and 15

rebounds for the Magic.

Hornets star Chris Paul's NBA-record steals streak ended at 108 games.

Spurs 91, Suns 90

In Phoenix, Roger Mason hit a 3-pointer from the corner at the buzzer to give San Antonio a thrilling win over Phoenix.

It was the Spurs' fourth straight victory.

Phoenix's Shaquille O'Neal become the only player other than Wilt Chamberlain to miss 5,000 career free throws, while Steve Nash had eight assists to become the 13th NBA player to reach 7,000 for his career.

Mavericks 102, Trail Blazers 94

In Portland, Oregon, Dirk Nowitzki scored 24 of his 30 points in the first half as Dallas ended Portland's usual Christmas joy.

The Trail Blazers had won their previous 13 straight Christmas games.

Cavaliers 93, Wizards 89

In Cleveland, the home team was forced to work harder than expected to see off lowly Washington and maintain its perfect home record this season.

Mo Williams had 24 points, and Cleveland needed 11 straight points in the final 1:33 to see off the Wizards, who have lost eight straight.

NBA Eastern Conference teams outplaying the West

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—The Western Conference has ruled the NBA the past decade. Not anymore.

West teams won seven of the past 10 championships and had a winning record against the East every season since 1998-99. Through Thursday's games, the East was 87-65 against the West this season.

"I think the balance is shifting," Indiana Pacers forward Danny Granger said.

The last time the East had a winning record against the West in a full season was in 1997-98. The East also had a winning mark in the strike-shortened 1998-99 season. If the East maintains its .572 winning percentage, it would be its second-best showing since 1990.

Several Eastern teams made off-season moves to compete with NBA champion Boston. The activity has helped them against the West, too.

Philadelphia added Elton Brand, Milwaukee picked up Richard Jefferson and Toronto traded for Jermaine O'Neal. Indiana's Granger and New Jersey's Devin Harris have emerged as young stars, and Miami and Chicago took advantage of good positions in a strong 2008 draft to immediately improve.

With young, established stars such as Cleveland's LeBron James, Orlando's Dwight Howard, Miami's Dwyane Wade and Toronto's Chris Bosh residing in the East, the makings of a full flip-flop are in place.

"Dallas is getting older; San Antonio's getting older," Granger said. "It's going to keep changing because

Atlanta's gotten better, Orlando's going to be good for a while, we're going to hit our stride eventually. It's going to change."

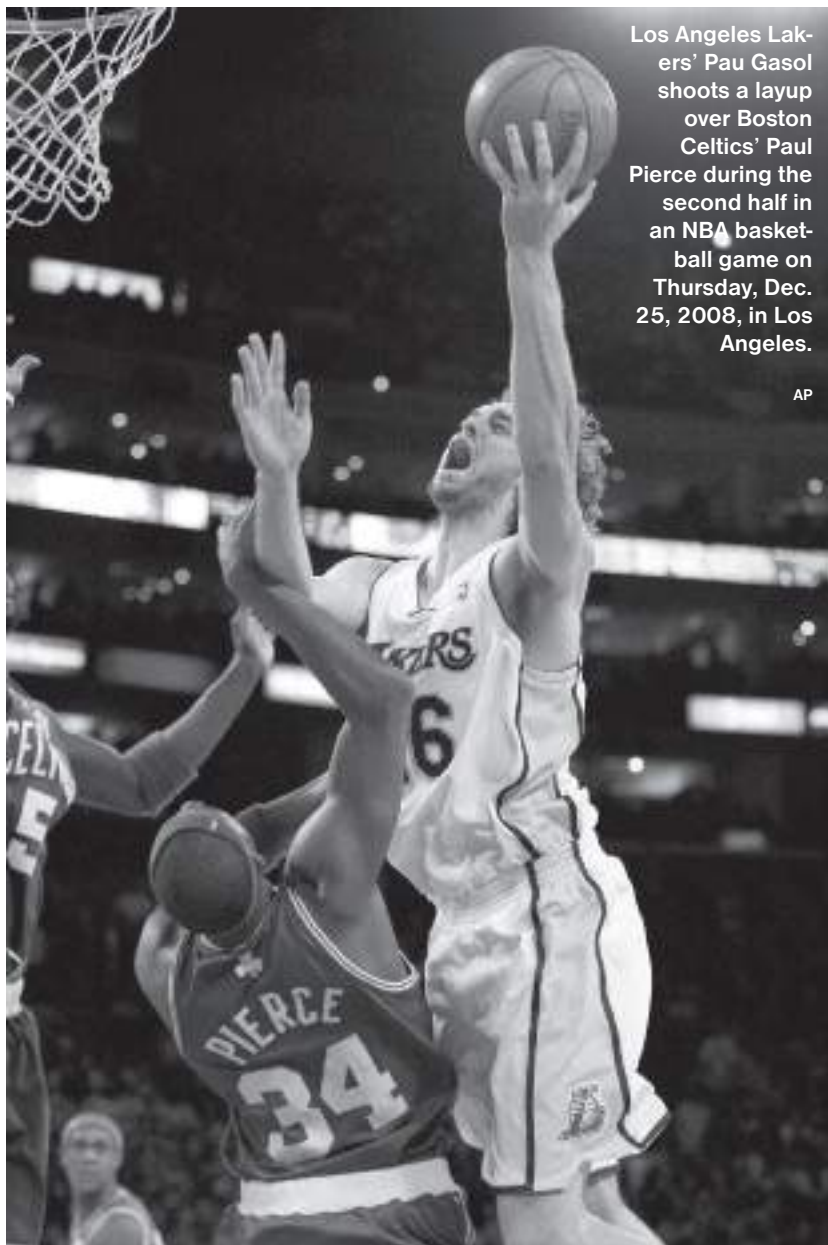
Many of the most recognizable names on the West's perennial play-off teams are in their 30s. Phoenix's Shaquille O'Neal is 36 and teammate and two-time league MVP Steve Nash, is 34. Dallas' Jason Kidd is 35 and teammate Dirk Nowitzki is 30. San Antonio's Tim Duncan is 32. Even Los Angeles' Kobe Bryant is 30.

Meanwhile, Wade is 26, Bosh is 24 and James and Howard are 23. Granger and Harris, both in the top 10 in scoring, are 25 and just beginning to reach their potential.

The West has its share of young stars, including Phoenix's Amare Stoudemire, New Orleans' Chris Paul, Utah's Deron Williams, Denver's Carmelo Anthony, Oklahoma City's Kevin Durant and Portland's Brandon Roy. Memphis' O.J. Mayo leads the NBA's rookie scorers.

Still, six of the seven teams with single-digit wins hail from the West, and the East is largely responsible. Memphis, Minnesota, Oklahoma City, Golden State, the Los Angeles Clippers and Sacramento have a combined 11-51 record against the East this season.

The balance is affecting the Eastern clubs, too. Detroit, normally one of the top teams in the standings, is 15-11 and in fifth place behind Boston, Cleveland, Orlando and Atlanta.



Los Angeles Lakers' Pau Gasol shoots a layup over Boston Celtics' Paul Pierce during the second half in an NBA basketball game on Thursday, Dec. 25, 2008, in Los Angeles.

AP

NBA BRIEFS

Howard will try to defend dunk crown

NEW YORK (AP)—Orlando Magic center Dwight Howard will try to defend his Slam Dunk championship at the NBA All-Star weekend in Phoenix in February. In New Orleans last season, Howard edged defending champion Gerald Green for the title in one of the most creative competitions in recent history. Howard scored perfect 50s on both of his first-round dunks—one of which included his donning a cape for a "Superman" dunk. Howard will face off against Memphis' Rudy Gay and 2006 winner Nate Robinson of the New York Knicks. A fan vote will pick the fourth competitor between Mil-

waukee's Joe Alexander, Portland's Rudy Fernandez, and Oklahoma City's Russell Westbrook.

Heat's Dwyane Wade helps family displaced by fire

MIAMI (AP)—When Dwyane Wade heard the plight of a South Florida woman whose nephew accidentally burned down her home—and ruined all the family's possessions—the Miami Heat star knew he had to do something. So he helped the family move into a new home, just in time for Christmas. Wade presented Dawn Smith with the ultimate Christmas gift on Wednesday—the keys to a her new house, along with some

furnishings, clothing and gifts to make sure her family has a joyous holiday, something that didn't seem likely just a few weeks ago. His Wade's World foundation will make some payments on the home, while Smith and her family get back on their feet. "That's what I try to teach my kids," said Wade, whose foundation has hosted several charity events this holiday season, mostly for needy children. "It's not about what you're going to receive—it's what you can give to others from what you've received."

Collison day to day with broken left thumb

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—Nick Collison's status remains day to day go-

ing into the Oklahoma City Thunder's game Friday at Detroit. Collison broke his left thumb against the Cleveland Cavaliers on Sunday night and missed the game at Atlanta on Tuesday night. He was back at practice on Wednesday, but coach Scott Brooks said it's still uncertain whether he'll be able to play against the Pistons. Collison had moved back into the starting lineup last week as Oklahoma City won its third game of the season against Toronto, but was hurt the next game.

Farmer undergoes knee surgery, out eight weeks

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. (AP)—Jordan Farmer underwent surgery Wednesday

to repair a torn lateral meniscus in his left knee, and the Los Angeles Lakers backup point guard is expected to be out approximately eight weeks. The surgery took a half-hour and was performed by Dr. Clarence Shields of the Kerlan-Jobe Orthopaedic Group. Farmer, a 6-foot-2, 180-pound third-year pro who attended UCLA, was injured during the fourth quarter of the Lakers' 89-87 loss at Miami on Friday night. He is averaging 7.9 points, 2.4 assists and 19.6 minutes per game. The Lakers made the 22-year-old Farmer the 26th overall pick in the 2006 draft. He averaged 4.4 points in 72 games as a rookie and 9.1 points in 82 games last season.

History on the line in Green Bay

By DAVE GOLDBERG
AP FOOTBALL WRITER



Forget all those scenarios involving teams still trying to make it to the postseason. The highlight of the final week of the regular season is the history that will be played out in Green Bay on Sunday.

That history, of course, belongs to the Detroit Lions, who already are the first team to go 0-15. Now they can complete the first 0-16 season if they lose to the Packers.

"When you think about it like that it almost seems impossible," center Dominic Raiola says. "But anything can happen. This team's got enough to beat Green Bay."

True at one level because the Lions have had their share of close calls, including two tight games with Minnesota, which is a game away from clinching the NFC North. But they won neither of those, nor any of the 13 other contests on their schedule, and gave up 48 points in their first meeting with the Packers at Ford Field.

Green Bay is a disappointment itself.

While Aaron Rodgers has been OK replacing Brett Favre, its defense has been bad and it is just 5-10 after reaching the NFC championship game last season. But it won't be ready to pack it in—the more the Lions have lost, the more their opponents have feared being the first to lose to them.

The only other team to finish a season winless was Tampa Bay, which went 0-14 in 1976. But those Bucs were an expansion team; these Lions are anything but—they've been in the NFL in some form since 1930, when as the Portsmouth Spartans, they went 5-6-3 under the not-so-legendary Hal "Tubby" Griffen.

The Packers managed to lose 20-17 in overtime to Chicago on Monday night, their fifth straight loss in a game they controlled most of the way. So Mike McCarthy just wants a win and isn't concerned about history.

"We're going to treat the Lions no different than any other opponent we're playing," the Packers coach says.

"You talk about what you feel their strengths are and their weaknesses and how we're going to attack them. I'm sure there will be a lot of outside media attention around the situation, but we're not going to spend any time on that. We have no control of that. We have no input on that. We have no opinion on it."

There are three playoff berths open in the AFC and two in the NFC in the NFL's final weekend.

In the AFC, Tennessee has won the South and has home-field advantage throughout the playoffs; Pittsburgh has won the North and has a first-round bye; and Indianapolis has a wild-card spot and the fifth seed.

The winner of the Broncos-Chargers game in San Diego on Sunday night takes the West; Miami wins the East if it beats the New York Jets at the Meadowlands; and Baltimore gets the second wild-card spot if it wins at home against Jacksonville.

New England gets the East title if it wins in Buffalo and the Jets beat the Dolphins, and it can get a wild card if it wins and the Ravens lose. If the Jets win and the Patriots lose, New York



Fans hold up a sign during the Detroit Lions against the New Orleans Saints NFL football game in Detroit, Sunday, Dec. 21, 2008.

AP

wins the East. If the Jets and Patriots both win, New York can get a wild card if the Ravens lose.

In the NFC, the New York Giants have won the East and clinched home-field advantage throughout. Arizona has won the West and both Carolina and Atlanta have qualified for the playoffs but don't know where they will be seeded.

If the Panthers win in New Orleans, they will be the NFC South champions and get a bye as the No. 2 seed. Atlanta, which is the No. 5 seed in that case, can win the South if it beats St. Louis at home and Carolina loses. Then the Panthers will be the No. 5 seed.

Minnesota can win the North by beating the Giants at home or if Chicago loses in Houston.

Dallas can get the second wild-card spot by winning in Philadelphia. If it loses and Tampa Bay beats Oakland at home, it gets the berth. If the Bucs and Cowboys lose, the Bears can get it by winning. If the Bucs and Bears lose, the Eagles get in by beating the Cowboys. Philadelphia also can get in if Tampa Bay falls and Chicago wins and Minnesota loses, because that would give the Bears the title in the North.

In other games Sunday, Cleveland is at Pittsburgh; Tennessee at Indianapolis; Kansas City at Cincinnati; Seattle at Arizona; and Washington at San Francisco.

Miami (10-5) at New York Jets (9-6) New England (10-5) at Buffalo (7-8)

There are a lot of story lines in the AFC East, but the most compelling involves Brett Favre and Chad Pennington. Favre was obtained to get the Jets to the playoffs - and, potentially, the Super Bowl. Pennington, who was competing in preseason with Kellen Clemens with the Jets, was cut when Favre arrived and signed by the Dolphins.

Now Pennington is the main reason Miami is a contender after going 1-15 a year ago. He can bury Favre and the Jets, who have lost three of their last four, including 13-3 to Seattle last

week. Favre has one TD pass and six interceptions in those games and acknowledges that his arm doesn't feel as strong as usual.

As for the Patriots: "We are always happy to see teams in our division lose," says Bill Belichick, whose team could become only the second ever to finish 11-5 and miss the playoffs; the 1985 Broncos were the other.

In this case, the team he wants to lose is Miami. Considering the long history of animosity between New York and New England, his need to root for the Jets must be painful. Belichick himself declined to coach the Jets in 2000 when Bill Parcells stepped down, and Belichick left for New England. There also is hostility between Belichick and Jets coach Eric Mangini, his former defensive coordinator.

Denver (8-7) at San Diego (7-8)

It seems like for almost half the season that the Broncos have needed one more win or one more Chargers loss to win the AFC West. Not quite. But Denver has lost two straight and San Diego has won three, so the division comes down to this game.

An acknowledged error by referee Ed Hochuli, who will be in Green Bay on Sunday, handed Denver the first meeting. But the Broncos' slump gives San Diego a chance to fulfill what was supposed to be its destiny after it entered the season as one of the favorites in the AFC.

If Denver wins, it would become just the fifth team in NFL history to have sole possession of first place in its division after every game in a season. Tennessee also accomplished the feat when it clinched the AFC South three weeks ago.

New York Giants (12-3) at Minnesota (9-6) Chicago (9-6) at Houston (7-8)

Minnesota can take the NFC North by winning or if the Bears lose. The Vikings missed a shot last Sunday when Adrian Peterson lost two fumbles in a 24-17 loss

that gave Atlanta a playoff spot. They missed another when the Bears rallied Monday night to beat the Packers 20-17 in overtime, blocking a late Green Bay field-goal attempt.

Tom Coughlin says the Giants will play hard after helping propel themselves to the Super Bowl last season by nearly beating the unbeaten Patriots in the finale. But he also says: "No years are the same. No situations are the same." And New York's PR staff trotted out backup QB David Carr to meet the media, which means he may play.

Assuming Brandon Jacobs sits, Derrick Ward, who had 215 yards rushing in the game that clinched home-field advantage for New York last week, needs 52 to make the Giants the fifth team ever to have two 1,000-yard rushers in the same season.

Carolina (11-4) at New Orleans (8-7) St. Louis (2-13) at Atlanta (10-5)

The 50-yard field-goal attempt by John Kasay that the Meadowlands wind pushed wide left against the Giants would have given the Panthers the NFC's top seed. Now if they lose in New Orleans—and no home team has won a division road game in the NFC South—they can fall to the fifth seed and a wild-card spot if (when?) the Falcons beat the Rams.

"It would be just awful not to get that first-round bye," Pro Bowl linebacker Jon Beason says. "I think we owe it to ourselves to finish off what we have done this season."

Mike Smith is pointing out to his Falcons the "no division road winners" oddity. "There's still a lot that's going to change in how this tournament is put together," the Falcons coach says.

Dallas (9-6) at Philadelphia (8-6-1) Oakland (4-11) at Tampa Bay (9-6)

The Cowboys got new life after losing to Baltimore on Saturday night when the Bucs and Eagles lost last Sunday. So Dallas gets in with a win, although

that might be difficult. Philadelphia has been erratic all season, but given its rivalry with the Cowboys and the Terrell Owens factor, it will play hard to knock off the Eagles.

Getting in is a long shot for the Eagles, whose loss in Washington last week was due in part to the failure of the receiving corps, especially rookie DeSean Jackson, who dropped a potential tying TD pass.

Philadelphia would be eliminated if the Bucs beat the Raiders or Chicago beats Houston in early games. Tampa Bay would be in if it wins and Philly beats Dallas; Chicago would be in if Tampa Bay loses, an unlikely scenario. And every contender has to lose for the Eagles to have a shot at making it.

Jacksonville (5-10) at Baltimore (10-5)

Win and in for the Ravens against a Jaguars team that has started to play decently again, scaring Indianapolis last week after beating Green Bay two weeks ago. But it's hard to see Baltimore losing given the stakes.

Baltimore's "names" get credit for its improvement from 5-11 last season: Ray Lewis, Ed Reed, rookie coach John Harbaugh and rookie QB Joe Flacco. But one reason the Ravens are on the verge of the playoffs is overlooked WR Derrick Mason, a consummate pro who played last week in extreme pain from a separated shoulder yet starred in the win against Dallas.

Tennessee (13-2) at Indianapolis (11-4) Cleveland (4-11) at Pittsburgh (11-4) Seattle (4-11) at Arizona (8-7)

The Titans, Colts, Steelers and Cardinals are all in the playoffs with their seedings established. So none needs to win. Arizona has lost four of five, all to teams with winning records, and surrendered an average of almost 42 points a game in those defeats. A win over the Seahawks in Mike Holmgren's final game with Seattle won't improve Arizona's position but might provide confidence in what seems likely to be a one-and-out playoff scenario.

The Tennessee-Indy game is a reprise of last year's finale, the annual Jim Sorgi sighting at QB for the Colts after Peyton Manning plays a series or two to prolong his starting streak. Last year, the Titans won to make the playoffs, something they hardly need this season.

Pittsburgh will play reasonably hard because of its rivalry with Cleveland, which will have newly signed Bruce Gradkowski at QB. This is almost surely the last game for Romeo Crennel as Browns coach - unlike Holmgren, who is retiring, he is likely to be fired.

Kansas City (2-13) at Cincinnati (3-11-1) Washington (8-7) at San Francisco (6-9)

San Francisco is 4-4 under Mike Singletary, who is about to be designated the permanent head coach.

Now that Carl Peterson is gone as Chiefs GM, that might not be the case for Herman Edwards with the Chiefs. But Marvin Lewis is probably safe with the Bengals, who have won two straight. Even if the penurious Mike Brown was inclined to fire him, which he's not, he wouldn't want to pay Lewis for not coaching.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE					
Atlantic Division					
Boston	W	L	Pct	GB	
New Jersey	27	3	.900	—	
Philadelphia	14	14	.500	12	
New York	12	16	.429	14	
Toronto	11	16	.407	14	1/2
	11	17	.393	15	
Southeast Division					
Orlando	23	6	.793	—	
Atlanta	18	10	.643	4	1/2
Miami	15	12	.556	7	
Charlotte	10	19	.345	13	
Washington	4	23	.148	18	
Central Division					
Cleveland	25	4	.862	—	
Detroit	15	11	.577	8	1/2
Milwaukee	14	16	.467	11	1/2
Chicago	13	15	.464	11	1/2
Indiana	10	18	.357	14	1/2
WESTERN CONFERENCE					
Southwest Division					
Houston	19	10	.655	—	
San Antonio	19	10	.655	—	
New Orleans	16	9	.640	1	
Dallas	17	11	.607	1	1/2
Memphis	9	19	.321	9	1/2
Northwest Division					
Denver	18	11	.621	—	
Portland	18	12	.600	1/2	
Utah	17	13	.567	1	
Minnesota	4	23	.148	13	
Oklahoma City	3	26	.103	15	
Pacific Division					
L.A. Lakers	24	5	.828	—	
Phoenix	16	12	.571	7	1/2
L.A. Clippers	8	20	.286	15	1/2
Golden State	8	22	.267	16	1/2
Sacramento	7	22	.241	17	
Yesterday's Games					
Orlando 88, New Orleans 68					
San Antonio 91, Phoenix 90					
L.A. Lakers 92, Boston 83					
Cleveland 93, Washington 89					
Dallas 102, Portland 94					
NBA LEADERS					
Scoring					
Wade, Mia.	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
James, Clev.	27	275	211	782	29.0
Bryant, LAL	28	275	192	774	27.6
Nowitzki, Dall.	27	258	157	701	26.0
Granger, Ind.	25	210	129	611	24.4
Harris, N.J.	25	179	218	600	24.0
Bosh, Tor.	28	228	198	661	23.6
Durant, OKC.	28	241	141	660	23.6
Carter, N.J.	28	224	142	643	23.0
Roy, Port.	29	227	175	658	22.7
Johnson, Atl.	28	235	100	633	22.6
Jefferson, Minn.	27	256	93	605	22.4
Stoudemire, Phoe.	27	213	176	605	22.4
Randolph, LAC	25	215	102	550	22.0
Butler, Wash.	26	201	132	561	21.6
J. Terry, Dall.	27	213	86	569	21.1
Gordon, Chi.	28	202	114	581	20.8
Anthony, Den.	25	178	127	513	20.5
Howard, Orl.	26	178	172	528	20.3
Duncan, S.A.	28	221	125	567	20.3
FG Percentage					
Nene, Den.	FG	FGA	PCT		
O'Neal, Phoe.	161	262	.615		
Okafor, Char.	134	226	.593		
Perkins, Bos.	158	268	.590		
Gasol, LAL	109	185	.589		
Lee, N.Y.	181	319	.567		
Millsap, Utah	160	283	.565		
Howard, Orl.	177	314	.564		
Bogut, Mil.	178	316	.563		
Stoudemire, Phoe.	130	231	.563		
	213	381	.559		
Rebounds					
Howard, Orl.	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Camby, LAC	26	117	244	361	13.9
Biedrins, G.S.	24	75	220	295	12.3
Okafor, Char.	30	131	222	353	11.8
Randolph, LAC	29	116	207	323	11.1
Bogut, Mil.	25	89	187	276	11.0
Lee, N.Y.	27	92	197	289	10.7
Duncan, S.A.	27	75	212	287	10.6
Jefferson, Minn.	28	76	214	290	10.4
Bosh, Tor.	27	87	186	273	10.1
	28	75	201	276	9.9
Assists					
Paul, N.O.	G	AST	AVG		
Williams, Utah	24	281	11.7		
Calderon, Tor.	17	164	9.6		
Duhon, N.Y.	26	229	8.8		
Nash, Phoe.	27	231	8.6		
Kidd, Dall.	24	205	8.5		
B. Davis, LAC	27	225	8.3		
Rondo, Bos.	27	220	8.1		
Wade, Mia.	29	215	7.4		
Billups, Den.	27	189	7.0		
	27	186	6.9		

By The Associated Press

FIBA Organizer to be used in Holiday Hoops

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Basketball Association of Northern Mariana Islands president Elias Rangamar said they are planning to use FIBA Organizer in this weekend's 2008 Annual Christmas Basketball Jam Festival Tournament.

The move aims not only to facilitate easy access on information about the games in the holiday caging, but also to help prepare volunteers for next year's Oceania Basketball Tournament.

The CNMI was awarded the hosting rights for the Oceania caging and

despite problems with the venues, BANMI is optimistic that the regional tournament will still be held on Saipan in June.

The Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, one of the two facilities that BANMI is eyeing to host games in the Oceania caging, failed to make the grade and FIBA Oceania is giving the federation until the end of this year to submit a program for the comprehensive upgrading of the gym.

Besides a high standard gym, knowing how to use a FIBA Organizer program and websites are among the requirements for keeping the Oceania caging here.

Teams aiming to make it to the tournament are also required to learn the program and manage their own websites.

FIBA Organizer is a software design to incorporate all facets of basketball administration, such as competition management (schedules, results, and standings) and membership database (clubs, players, coaches, and referees).

Data gathered through the FIBA Organizer are then put in the respective websites of the 21 island-nation members of FIBA Oceania.

"It his high time that we start using the software, as we are preparing to host the Oceania tournament next year. This practice (at Christmas caging) will give us a glimpse on what to expect come the tournament in June," Rangamar said.

Several volunteers and BANMI officials attended a seminar on FIBA Organizer and website management

conducted by FIBA Oceania secretary general Steve Smith and Zone administration manager Judy Smith in October this year.

FIBA Oceania through the information posted at FIBA Oceania website last month, reminded members to have competitions being run with the FIBA Organizer program by January 31, 2009.

Steve Smith added over 285 basketball associations in Australia and New Zealand are using the program, and now it is time for other 19 federations to join them.

"Let's get together, get the programs used in the Pacific Islands. Let's show FIBA that we can do things well, and that we are keen to see our sport moved forward," the secretary general added.

FESTIVAL

From Page 28

Adding to the professionalism of the event, an automated, chip-technology timing system will be utilized by timing company Keisoku-kobo.

"The chip system is simple and professional. It provides fast and accurate results for each athlete and will greatly streamline timekeeping for the Festival," said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio. "We strongly encourage participants to register early so that their information can also be including in the timing database early."

Close to 200 runners from Japan have registered for the event, including returning Japan celebrity Okushi Erika and 30 travel agents competing as members of a Northwest Airlines familiarization tour.

Orientation for all participants is mandatory and will be held at 4pm on Jan. 16 at American Memorial Park Amphitheater. The orientation will include a briefing on the new timing system and distribution of bibs containing the timing chip, followed by a carbo spaghetti dinner party at 5pm.

MVA has confirmed that the start time for the marathon will be 4:30am, as already announced internationally, while the half marathon and

10km run will begin at 5:45am. The course was also re-measured earlier this month by Bridge Enterprise of Japan, and turnaround points have changed slightly to ensure accuracy of course distance.

All runners will begin at Micro Beach at American Memorial Park within view of Managaha Island. The Full Marathon Course: from Micro Beach north along Middle Road through the villages of Puerto Rico, Tanapag, and San Roque; turnaround in the peaceful greenery of Marpi right before reaching the Far East Broadcasting Company turnoff; return to connect with the Half Marathon Course. The Half Marathon Course: from Micro Beach south on Beach Road along Saipan's western lagoon; through the villages of Garapan, San Jose, Susupe, Chalan Kanoa, and San Antonio; turnaround at the San Antonio basketball court; return and finish at Micro Beach. The 10-km Course: Micro Beach south along Beach Road; through the villages of Garapan and San Jose; turnaround in-front of Pacific Outlet; return and finish at Micro Beach.

The fee to register for the full marathon is \$35 and the half marathon and 10km is \$25. A late fee of \$10 will be added for registration after Jan. 9, 2009, and all interested participants are encouraged to register early. The

last day of registration is Jan. 16, 2009. No entries will be accepted on the day of the race.

The age divisions for the full marathon are up to 40, 40-49, and 50 years and up. The half and 10km age groups are 14 and under, 15-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60 plus. Prizes will be given out for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each category. Raffle drawings for prizes will also be held at the banquet. All runners will receive a finisher's T-shirt after the event.

Major sponsors of the event are Northwest Airlines, Oakley, MVA, Northern Mariana Athletics, and DFS Galleria Saipan. Supporting companies and agencies are Dept. of Public Safety, Hawaiian Rock, American Memorial Park, Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Works (Roads and Grounds), and Commonwealth Health Center.

"The Winter Festival of Runs is one of the premiere running events held annually in Saipan, Tinian and Rota, and we look forward to more local and international entries this year," said Tenorio. "We also thank Saipan drivers for their continued consideration and cautiousness in sharing the island roadways with our runners that day."

To register or for more information, please contact Mr. Ed Diaz of MVA at telephone numbers 1-670-664-3210 or email at ediaz@mymarianas.com. (PR)

LAKERS

From Page 28

LeBron James and the guys, who are 25-4 after beating the Washington Wizards on Thursday night, keep winning, the Lakers may mount a major effort for them, too.

Yet to be determined is whether the Lakers have undergone an actual attitude adjustment and will play hard all the time.

On the other hand, when you think of their fans booing them off the floor at halftime in their last game here when they trailed the New York Knicks by 15, followed by losses in Miami and Orlando and a rally from five points behind in the last 3:30 to win in Memphis, Christmas marked some turnaround.

The Lakers defended energetically, if not always well.

They showed that their physical advantages over the Celtics in size and depth matter.

Of course, for a while it looked there was still no advantage they had that

the Celtics couldn't overcome, as they overcame that 24-point lead in pivotal Game 4 of the NBA Finals last season.

If the Lakers didn't want to admit it, and the Celtics were nice enough not to throw it in their faces (this time), the Lakers needed this game much more.

It was on their floor. They were the ones who lost in the Finals, looking physically intimidated at the end.

They were the ones who had struggled in recent weeks, while the Celtics' winning streak climbed to 19.

So, with the Lakers playing as hard as they could, taking a 10-point lead in the first half and an eight-point lead in the third quarter, the Celtics proceeded to knot the score.

Then, in a plot turn from last season, the Lakers became the ones who gutted it out at the end, finishing withy an 11-1 run with Pau Gasol scoring six of the points, totally shutting the Celtics down.

The Celtics grimaced and took it like the professionals they are, giving the Lakers credit.

Well, all but one Laker.

The exception was Andrew Bynum, who missed last season's Finals, whose modest line—nine points, seven rebounds, seven blocks—doesn't measure his impact.

Nor were the Celtics about to acknowledge it.

Does Bynum make a difference, Kevin Garnett was asked.

"No," said Garnett.

Compared to last season's team?

"No."

It's not a shock to run into another seven-footer?

"It's not a shock because our defensive assignments are made if it was Chris Mihm, if it was Andrew Bynum, if it was Pau at the five (center) and Lamar (Odom) at the four (power forward)," said Garnett. "Our defensive assignments don't change no matter who's there. ...

"Hell, it could be Shaq (O'Neal). Our defensive assignments are what they are."

Except they're not.

Last spring, Gasol was single-covered and held to 14.7 point a game by

the physical Kendrick Perkins. Now Perkins guards Bynum with Garnett on Gasol.

As great as KG is, he won't beat Pau up. In another departure from last spring, Gasol fought back at the end, going from a three-possession stretch in which he passed up two open jumpers and turned the ball over in the post, to his closing burst.

The Celtics, who pride themselves on execution, couldn't get anything close to a good shot in the last two minutes.

Oh, and Rajan Rondo said they "argued among ourselves," including one in which he and Ray Allen barked at each other so long, Paul Pierce came over and pushed Allen back toward the Laker he was supposed to guard to break it up.

"We argue like that all the time," Garnett said. "Our communication is the strength of this team."

If the Celtics can survive their own discussions and still play all out, it's no wonder they're so good. For the moment, the Lakers are just glad to know they're in the same league.



Forget all those scenarios involving teams still trying to make it to the postseason.

26

Saipan Tribune Sports

Perhaps now the Los Angeles Lakers can put the anguish of losing the NBA finals to Boston and the embarrassment over the way the series ended behind them.

25



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

28 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2008

12 CNMI jr. netters off to Guam

Jodel Fernandez, seen in this file photo going for a baseline forehand, is competing in her first off-island tournament, as she and 11 other CNMI netters join the 2008 Guam Junior Tennis Championships.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CNMI tennis national coach and Northern Marianas Islands Tennis Association vice president Jeff Race is bringing 12 junior players in Guam to participate in the 2008 Guam Junior Championships.

The Guam tournament will run from Dec. 27 to 30 and the CNMI bets are expected to leave Saipan early morning today.

Race said the CNMI Team is composed of Ilia Corella, Cody and Gabrielle Race, Chris Cajigan, Jodel Fernandez, John Cano, Tam-



my and Dylan Ackerman, Neghar Rastguiy, Amy Arenovski, and Kennedy Izuka.

The Commonwealth's netters will be competing in the singles and doubles divisions of three age groups, namely the 10-and-under, 14-and-under, and 18-and-under.

The CNMI coach is looking forward to a good showing from 14-and-under participants Cajigan, Corella, Arenovski, and Rastguiy.

See 12 CNMI on Page 27

Basketball courts in three villages renovated

Three villages in Precinct 4 had their basketball courts renovated through the efforts of Rep. Joseph Norita Camacho.

The basketball courts, which got a facelift, are located in Tanapag, San Roque, and As Matuis.

"Precinct 4 has four public basketball courts—Capital Hill, Tanapag, San Roque, and As Matuis. The Capital Hill basketball court had been renovated so it was in a relative good condition. The Tanapag, San Roque, and As Matuis basketball courts needed new boards, rims, and lights. The plywood boards were rotted away and the rims were bent and useless from rust. The lighting units were missing," Camacho said.

With the poor condition of these courts, they are used as parking lots instead of a venue for basketball competitions and other recreational activities.

Camacho added when he talked to some residents of these villages, parents were worried about kids wandering in the streets and, worse, getting involved in bad activities because they have nothing worthwhile to do.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rep. Joseph Norita Camacho poses with some youth at the renovated basketball court in As Matuis.

"The kids are bored because there is nothing to do and no wonder why they are getting in trouble' was a common statement I heard from parents and residents of Precinct 4," Camacho said.

"People come to basketball courts to play. Friends, neighbors, and families are coming to play or just relax and watch other people play," the lawmaker added.

Through the assistance of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs and Commonwealth Utilities Corp., Camacho started to work on the things needed to refurbish the courts.

Plywood and paint were purchased to fix the board and replace the rims. New lighting units were also bought and volunteers did the water blasting of the concrete courts before painting the lines.

Once the renovations were done, Camacho saw several kids staying at the basketball courts anew and having fun playing with their friends. (Roselyn B. Monroyo)

By MARK HEISLER
Los Angeles Times



Lakers find motivation

Fear this.

On Christmas Day, for the first time this season, the Los Angeles Lakers took the floor without serene confidence in the fact they were going to win.

Since they beat their arch-rivals, the Boston Celtics, 92-83, this should be an invaluable experience in other games against teams they respect enough to fear.

Let's see, there's the Feb. 5 game at Boston.

And the Feb. 8 game at Cleveland.

They also play the Cavaliers Jan. 19. That one is here, but if

See LAKERS on Page 27

Festival of Runs adds automated timing, re-measures course



Organizers are warming up for the 2009 Winter Festival of Runs on Jan. 17, 2009. The run will consist of a full marathon (42.195 km), a half marathon (21.079 km) and a 10-kilometer fun run along Saipan's scenic roadways.

See FESTIVAL on Page 27